

Triple murder and suicide overshadow Belfast visit by Irish republic president

Policeman kills 3 at Sinn Fein HQ

By EDWARD GORMAN, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

A YOUNG policeman bluffed his way into the Sinn Fein offices in Belfast and shot three people dead yesterday. He then drove to Lough Neagh and killed himself.

The shootings, hours after the officer had been arrested and suspended from duty for drunkenly firing shots over a colleague's grave, overshadowed the Irish president's first visit to Northern Ireland and coincided with a mass protest against terrorist violence.

President Robinson said she was distressed and appalled by the incident, adding that such tragedies were all too common in the province.

Police said the 24-year-old constable had been distraught over the death of a fellow constable in a domestic incident last Thursday. That officer, whose wife has been charged, was buried in Coleraine, Co Down, on Monday and that night his friend was detained after firing shots over the grave. The officer was disarmed and released into the care of a senior officer after promising to attend an official medical examination yesterday lunchtime.

But instead of keeping the appointment, he drove to the Sinn Fein offices on the Low-

er Falls Road, armed with a pump-action shotgun. He gained entry by posing as a journalist with an appointment for an interview, then opened fire, killing three people and wounding two others.

The 24-year-old policeman, who is believed to have been a member of the RUC's anti-terrorist mobile support unit, then drove off in a BMW. Twenty minutes later, he telephoned the Newtownabbey police station and said he was responsible for the murders, and soon afterwards he called again to say he was in the Lough Neagh area to the west of Belfast. Within 15 minutes, his body had been discovered in his car with the gun lying next to it.

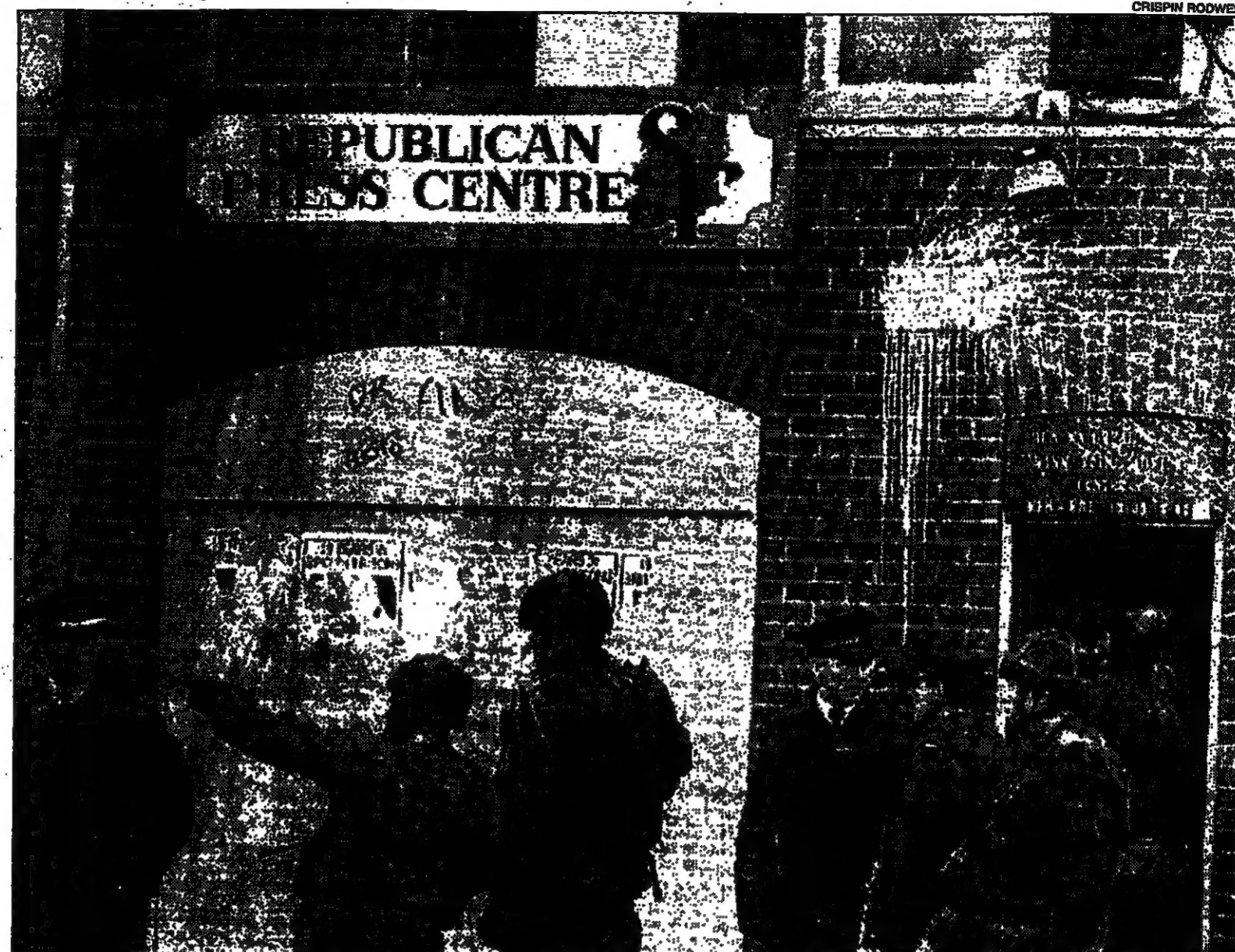
Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein president who arrived at his party's headquarters five minutes after yesterday's attack, said the three victims had been shot in the chest at close range. "One died within seconds of my arriving. There were shotgun cartridges on the floor and some of those who were killed were shot close up."

One of the dead was an elderly doorman who was not a member of Sinn Fein. It was not immediately clear if the other two who died were party members. One of the wounded was seriously ill in hospital, the other, a woman who was shot in the mouth, was not thought to be in a serious condition.

President Robinson, speaking three hours after the shootings, appealed for greater understanding among the people of Ireland to bring an end to the bloodshed. "We must find more common ground," she said at a press conference at the Linen Hall Library. "We must learn to live together on this island. There is a task for politicians, but there is also a need for a much broader sense of understanding."

"None of us can stand aside from this. We must all, by knowing each other better, work for the kind of linkages and relationships which will help us to hopefully grow out of this cycle of violence which is causing us such pain and such sorrow."

Mr Adams, who like Mrs Robinson spoke before the policeman's role had been disclosed, said the attack was an inevitable product of a McCarthyite climate of intimidation against Sinn Fein. "It's little wonder that the same people who are involved in that climate think they can kill Sinn Fein supporters. Those who condemn Sinn Fein, those who involve them-



Members of the security forces outside the Sinn Fein HQ on the Falls Road in Belfast after yesterday's triple murder

seives in that climate, cannot remove themselves absolutely from the tragic incident here today," he said.

Searnaid Mallon, security spokeswoman for the SDLP, called for a full investigation, saying: "These killings will cause personal grief to many and increase the fear, anger and sense of despair within the community. The peculiar circumstances of these murders raises a number of questions which demand clear and unequivocal answers from the authorities." Ulster had become the murder capital of Europe, he said.

The shootings, described by the RUC as a tragic sequence of events, came after one of Northern Ireland's bloodiest months in recent years. Seventeen civilians were killed in January, including eight builders ambushed on their way home from work. Yesterday, about



Lax security, page 2 Mary Robinson, Irish president, on her Belfast visit

Four hundred call hotline on Britain's most wanted man

By CRAIG SETON AND PETER DAVENPORT

POLICE received hundreds of telephone calls yesterday after issuing an artist's impression and a description of the man who kidnapped Stephanie Slater, the Birmingham estate agent. More than 400 people rang a hotline number within hours of an appeal for help.

The front and side facial views were prepared by an artist from Miss Slater's recollections of her abductor and police believe they are a good likeness. They have also released a sketch of a badge with a railway motif which she saw on the man's jacket as

she showed him around a house in Great Barr, Birmingham, two weeks ago. Detectives are checking its origins with British Rail, railway societies and magazines.

Police have linked Miss Slater's abductor with the man who kidnapped Julie Dart, aged 18, in Leeds last July. She was found strangled ten days later. Incident rooms have been set up by West Midlands and West Yorkshire police in Birmingham and Leeds.

Miss Slater, aged 25, told police that her kidnapper was aged between 40 and 45,

about 5ft 7in, with straight, thick dark hair, brushed back, and a short neck. He had a broad face with a square forehead and a straight nose, which was indented at the end, making it look slightly prominent. He was wearing black framed spectacles, but detectives believe that they could have been part of a disguise. He spoke in a soft voice, possibly with a Yorkshire accent, and was wearing a hip-length black jacket in duffle-coat type material with a badge showing a train on railway

Continued on page 14, col 2

BAe need not repay £44m sweeteners

BRITISH Aerospace will not have to repay the £44.4 million received in sweeteners from the government in 1988 to buy the Rover Group.

The European Court of Justice ruled yesterday that although the European Commission was substantially correct in ruling the Rover aid illegal, it had overstepped its powers by addressing its complaint directly to the government.

Sir Leon Brittan, the European competition commissioner, is considering whether to open a new case.

Full details, page 15

Labour promises to ban big classes

By JOHN O'LEARY

LABOUR yesterday renewed its effort to make education a top election issue with a commitment to impose a legal ban on overcrowded classes and by pressing home its attack on the government's approach to the revival of grammar schools.

Neil Kinnock, the party leader, led the assault and promised to cut state school classes to a maximum of 40 children within a year of taking office. Labour would establish a maximum class size of 35 within three years, eventually bringing the figure down to 30.

He also restated Labour's commitment to abolish selective schools. "When Kenneth Clarke stumbles into saying that he has 'no objection' to the re-emergence of the grammar, secondary modern and technical school system, it is clear that he wants a future made up of yesterday's. When he should be facing up to the needs and realities of the 1990s, [he] succumbs to nostalgia for the 1950s."

Matthew Taylor, the Liberal Democrat education spokesman, also criticised Mr Clarke's weekend statement that he would look sympathetically at grant-maintained schools that want to become grammar schools. "We are opposed to the 11-plus system that grammar schools imply, but we would not stand in the way if local people want it. What you cannot do is to leave it to one particular opted-out school to decide because that has an impact on all the rest."

Mr Clarke denied any change of heart on grammar schools. He said that the government did not intend to impose any organisational pattern for schools, and any application for a change of character from comprehensive to selective entry would be considered on its merits. He added: "We are all concerned by excessive class sizes, but class sizes are smaller than they were ten years ago. Most of the remaining excess-

Continued on page 14, col 2

Tories woo youth, page 6

TODAY IN THE TIMES

WITH RUSHDIE ON THE RUN



"We were on the lam in Wales, running through the Black Mountains like unarmed smugglers..."

When Salman Rushdie went into hiding, his wife Marianne Wiggins joined him and kept a diary. Life & Times section, page 1

FREE FLIGHTS



From Asia to Australia, a friend can fly free and stay free with the six Times privilege tokens published each day this week. Collect the fourth one today. Life & Times section, page 4

POWER ABUSE



Veronique Niertz, French minister for women's rights, tells Libby Purves about her firm line on sexual harassment. Life & Times section, page 5

Venezuela coup fails

Venezuela's defence minister said rebel troops had surrendered in Maracaibo, the last stronghold, after a coup attempt against President Carlos Andrés Pérez. Loyal forces control the country, ending the first military threat in 34 years of democracy. Page 9

Radio licence favourites

TV-am and Virgin, losers in the independent television auction, are industry favourites to win Britain's second independent national radio licence even though they did not submit the highest bid. Page 2

Keays claim

Sara Keays told a libel jury that the scandal in her 11-year affair with Cecil Parkinson was that he allowed "dreadful things" to happen to save his political skin. Page 3

Tyson denied

Mike Tyson's defence lawyers were denied a request to introduce three witnesses who claim to have seen his accuser in sex play with him soon before she claims he raped her. Page 9

The Times top

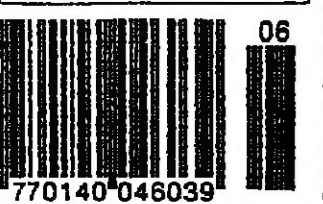
More leading businessmen - 47 per cent - read The Times than any other general daily newspaper, according to the latest Mori captains of industry poll. Asked which business section was most useful for company information, The Times was read by 43 per cent, more than the Daily Telegraph and the Independent combined. For City information, the Financial Times rated 87 per cent. Page 15

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Employers seeking chief executives, managers and other senior staff are advertising tomorrow in 13 pages of appointments in the Life & Times section	



Veil is lifted on Arafat's secret wedding

From CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN CAIRO

YASSIR Arafat has been wedded to the Palestinian cause for as long as anyone can remember, his private life a mystery. His dedication is to the cause of Palestine; the most persistent image of him is of a man with an olive branch in one hand and a gun in the other.

But now persistent rumours which have had the Middle East agog for the past few days have been confirmed: Mr Arafat, aged 62, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, with his familiar chequered keffiyeh (head-dress) and permanent designer stubble, has married for the first time.

Arab diplomats yesterday named his new wife as Suha Tawil, aged 28, one of his advisers on economic affairs and the daughter of one of the best-known Palestinian poets, Raymond Tawil, a founder of the Jerusalem-based Pales-

tine press service news agency. Miss Tawil is a Christian, Mr Arafat a Muslim. "I cannot deny it, but it is chairman Arafat's right to declare it officially," Raymond Tawil said. "I believe there will be a communiqué from PLO HQ in Tunis about this in a day or two."

The Arab sources said that the wedding was in Tunis last month, but an aide to Mr Arafat in the Tunisian capital said coyly: "We never comment on such private matters."

The PLO leader is a Sunni Muslim, while the Tawils, who lived for many years in Ramallah, in the Israeli occupied West Bank, are Greek Orthodox Christians. Mrs Tawil, who now lives in Paris and Washington, described Mr Arafat as the spiritual leader of all Palestinians, and said his marriage would be an important gesture indicating the unity of Palestinian Muslims and Christians. When asked in the past why he had never married, Mr Arafat

usually replied that he was "betrotted to the revolution" and that no woman should have to share the rigours of his life.

Mossad, the Israeli secret service, has often been blamed for spreading rumours that Mr Arafat was homosexual. This has been countered by accounts from Palestinian colleagues of his relationships over the years with a number of Arab women, usually described as simply built, mother figures.

In the mid-1970s it was reported widely that he sent aides to propose to Nada al-Yashroufi, a beautiful Palestinian widow who lived in Beirut. She turned him down, saying she loved him as a Palestinian leader but not as a husband.

Miss Tawil is known as one of the brightest and most attractive members of the PLO's large entourage. Educated in political studies at the Sorbonne, she worked directly for Mr Arafat in Tunis.



Arafat: a communiqué from HQ likely soon

WE DIDN'T SAVE THEM FROM POACHERS JUST TO HAVE THEM CARVED UP BY POLITICIANS



In 1992, 8,000 elephants will be shot by Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa for their skins and ivory.

The UK Government may support their plan to allow the sale of the skins on the international market. That means overturning the international ban on trade in elephant products.

Two years ago before the international ban was passed, 100,000 elephants were being killed every year. Poaching has declined dramatically since the ban.

The ban is now in serious danger of being weakened and thousands of elephants face extermination.

If you oppose killing elephants for their skins or their ivory, please join our campaign today.

If you think live elephants are priceless, help us to ensure that dead elephants are worthless.

☐ I would like to become a member of EIA and Tusk Force for £12 and/or I enclose a donation

☐ £100 ☐ £50 ☐ £25

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Losers in TV bids tipped to win radio franchise

BY MELINDA WITTSTOCK, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

TV-AM and Virgin, losers in last autumn's independent television blind bid auction, have emerged as industry favourites to win the battle for Britain's second independent national radio licence, despite their joint bid failing to offer the most cash.

An annual bid of £4.01 million from Independent National Broadcasting Company (INBC), a consortium of Sheffield businessmen and former radio executives, yesterday stunned the radio and advertising industries, with executives predicting that its bid will be rejected as unsustainable by the Radio Authority. Last August Classic FM won the non-pop national licence after the highest bidder, Showtime Radio at £1.75 million, failed to secure the franchise.

Steve Hyde, broadcasting director in charge of radio at Zenith Media, the advertising sales agency, said: "There's no question this radio auction will be a repeat of the last fiasco. INBC's bid is ridiculously high. I give it no chance whatsoever. TV-AM and Virgin will probably get it."

Five bidders emerged by yesterday's 2pm application deadline, all but one promising a mix of album rock and Top 40 pop hits. Capital Radio, the successful London station, failed to submit a bid after coming to the conclusion that local, rather than national, radio was a better investment.

Virgin and TV-AM, who bid £1.88 million in a 50-50 joint venture, said last night they

were confident of success. Bruce Gyngell, chairman of TV-AM and the radio venture Independent Music Radio, said: "We put in the highest bid we thought commensurate with running a profit: £4 million does seem optimistic. I think it looks quite good for us."

Toby Horton, a director of INBC and prospective Tory parliamentary candidate for Rother Valley, south Yorkshire, defended his consortium's high bid. "We have a unique opportunity to broadcast to 40 million people. We expect our audience reach to grow from 5 per cent next year to 25 per cent in 1996. We are optimistic about advertising revenue because this will be the catalyst that turns radio into a major advertising medium."

Other bidders were not nearly so optimistic. National Rock Radio, the Allied Entertainment/Atlantic 252 venture which submitted the lowest bid of £211,000, described INBC's bid as commercial suicide. Ed Simons, Allied's chairman, said: "Our two partners [RTE and CLT, the Luxembourg broadcaster] operate the nearest thing to a national radio station [Atlantic 252] and they could not justify more than £211,000."

The two other bidders were 20/20 Radio, backed by Children's Radio, the Home Counties commercial station with an offer of £1.31 million, and Score Radio, backed by Scotland's Radio Clyde, Lord Hanson and David Jacobs, a former Radio 2 presenter, with a bid of £701,000. Richard Findlay, a director of Radio Clyde, said he could not imagine a business plan that would support INBC's £4 million bid.

The winner of the national licence will also have to pay an annual licence fee to the Radio Authority of £645,000, plus 4 per cent of advertising revenue to the Treasury. Transmission costs are estimated at £1.5 million a year, while royalty payments to the Phonographic Performance are expected to reach £2.5 million a year.

The authority will announce the winner in April.

Leading article, page 11
Media, L&T section, page 6

Lamont forced to increase borrowing

BY ROBIN OAKLEY
POLITICAL EDITOR

DOWNING Street yesterday indicated that Norman Lamont, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would be telling MPs in his Budget on March 10 of the government's need to increase borrowing further. As well as revising upwards his autumn statement borrowing figures for 1991-2 he will be scaling down the growth prediction, after a weaker than expected performance in the last quarter of last year.

There is a growing belief in government circles that the economy's failure to stir into life will be used by the Chancellor to justify "fiscal activism", a euphemism for tax cuts, to stimulate high street spending. Ministers are now using the gloomy economic news to justify a turnaround on their willingness to give a short-term stimulus to the economy.

In the Commons yesterday there were acrimonious exchanges between John Major and Neil Kinnock in which the Labour leader accused the prime minister of presiding over the worst recession since the 1930s with no idea of what to do to end it.

Officials later said that it was "bananas" to suggest that the economy was as bad as in the 1930s and insisted that the current recession was "enormously shallower" than that of 1979-81. There was "no way" that the figures for the last recession would be approached.

In the 1979-81 recession, GDP had fallen by 1.9 per cent, non-oil GDP by 5.5 per cent and manufacturing output by 15.6 per cent. On the latest figures, GDP was down 3.4 per cent, non-oil GDP by the same figure and output by 6.6 per cent.

After a brief respite on Monday the Commons was yesterday back full-scale electioneering. When Mr Kinnock said the government had caused the longest recession since the 1930s and "do not have a clue how to get out of it", Mr Major suggested that his Labour counterpart was economically illiterate and incapable of leading his party or the country.

Mr Major said Britain's ills were part of a world recession and quoted Robin Leigh-Pemberton, the Governor of the Bank of England, as saying that the conditions were now in place to underpin a sustained recovery.

Parliament, page 6

Falls Road fortifications hid lax security

Steel shutters on windows and rock boulders outside the Sinn Féin offices served little purpose, writes Jamie Dettmer

THE Republican offices in the Falls Road where the gunman struck yesterday are fortified with reinforced steel shutters on the windows and wire grids covering all the doors.

Surveillance cameras monitor the adjacent streets and, to gain entrance, visitors are scrutinised on the closed-circuit television set and questioned on the intercom. Outside the rundown-looking offices, huge boulders have been placed to deter any Beirut-style suicidal car bomb attack on the building.

Despite all the apparatus and surveillance equipment, the security at the Falls Road offices is not tight. Once visitors are inside, the casually dressed guards on duty tend not to frisk them or study with any obvious concentration identification documents that may be offered. Generally, two guards are on duty and they spend most of their time in a cramped office off the main waiting room, reading the local papers and watching television.

Paddy Loughran, the elderly doorman who was killed in yesterday's shooting, was hardly an intimidating presence. He enjoyed a gossip and a joke and usually regaled visiting British journalists with blood-curdling stories.

One of the reasons for the relaxed atmosphere at the Falls Road offices is that the maze-like building serves a dual purpose. As well as accommodating the Republican press office on the first floor, the building is used as a drop-in centre for Catholics in West Belfast eager to seek advice on housing or social security problems.

As part of its political effort to secure support for Republicanism, Sinn Féin has invested much time in campaigning on local issues such as housing. One of the people killed yesterday was reported to have been in the building to enquire about accommodation in the area.

The ground floor rooms are decorated with IRA posters, many featuring the hunger striker Bobby Sands. Most of the rooms on the first floor are clean but bare, with white-washed walls. Sinn Féin opened the Re-



Attack survivor: an injured man is carried from the Sinn Féin offices after yesterday's killings

publican press centre in 1970. For many years there was only one press officer and, apart from installing a telex machine to send out press releases, Sinn Féin made little effort at news management.

In 1981, during the hunger strikes at the Maze prison, Richard McAuley, then the press officer, could say to a visiting journalist: "Do you know the famous Republican propaganda machine everybody talks about? ... I'm it."

The creation of a wider press machine came after the hunger strikes, when the IRA recognised the full value of propaganda. Instead of searching for comments and guidance from informal Republican contacts, the press suddenly found a much more formalised, centrally controlled and professional network.

A fax machine was installed in the Falls Road

offices (even the Royal Ulster Constabulary's press office did not have one) and local Sinn Féin offices throughout the province began to open their doors to reporters. The Republican news management effort was not copied by the less well-organised Protestant paramilitaries.

Like Margaret Thatcher, the Republican leaders came to understand that paramilitary activity thrived on "the oxygen of publicity" and they became adept in trying to exploit the media.

The Falls Road building is in sight of an army observation post at the top of a block of flats near by. Republicans who work in the press centre frequently claim that sophisticated listening devices have been placed near the building by the security forces so that all conversations can be picked up.

Triple shooting, page 1

Irish president's plea for peace

BY EDWARD GORMAN

MARY Robinson, the Irish president, did not allow the murders at Sinn Féin headquarters yesterday to distract her from her mission of reconciliation.

Mrs Robinson, accompanied by her husband Nick, was making her first visit to Belfast since being elected president. She said: "We must learn to live together on this island."

The task facing her was brought home at the outset yesterday when Nigel Dodds, the Unionist Lord Mayor of Belfast, refused to welcome her to the city because of the republic's claim to Northern Ireland. Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist party,

said that he would not meet her.

Mrs Robinson resigned from the Irish Labour party in 1985 because the Anglo-Irish Agreement was carried through without consultation with Unionists. She is known to believe that the republic's constitutional claim to Northern Ireland should be modified. She began her visit by meeting women's groups at the offices of the Equal Opportunities Commission. She then lunched at the Law Society. Later she saw voluntary and community groups before attending a reception at Stormont hosted by Peter Brooke, the Northern Ireland secretary.

Muggers return to medieval thief row

BY PETER DAVENPORT

TIMES and tastes may change but crime and criminals display a depressing consistency. Archaeologists in York have unearthed a collection of empty purses in what they describe as a medieval muggers' alley. And when they returned to the site each Monday morning they found modern empty purses and wallets apparently thrown over the fence by thieves of today.

The medieval purses were found close together in what used to be an alley at Swinegate, an area in the centre of York frequented in Chaucer's time by thieves and prostitutes. Archaeologists who excavated the site, since covered by a £5 million shopping development, believe they may have uncovered a dumping ground for the unwanted proceeds of street criminals.

Nick Pearson, the director of the excavation and a member of the York Archaeological Trust, said yesterday: "In the 13th century, the area at the back of Swinegate was a real thieves' kitchen."

The absence of coins or valuables and the proximity of the purses suggested to the archaeologists that they had not just been carelessly dropped. But it was the behaviour of modern criminals which confirmed to Mr Pearson and his team the accuracy of their theory. "Every Monday morning when we returned to the site we found empty purses and wallets which had been thrown over the hoardings surrounding it. They had obviously been stolen over the weekend and separated from the cash and credit cards they contained before being discarded. It's a quite nice example of behaviour which hasn't changed since the medieval period."

Town halls refuse rate rebates for struggling firms

Small businesses are finding that a long campaign for a rebate scheme was not worth fighting, reports Douglas Broom

SMALL firms are being forced out of business by local councils refusing to use special powers to grant business rate rebates in cases of hardship, according to a survey. The Federation of Small Businesses says that only one local authority has told its business ratepayers about the rebate scheme and fewer than 20 rebates have been granted across the country.

The federation's survey, published yesterday, found that only Labour-controlled Dudley council in the West Midlands had included details of the scheme with business rate bills. It had received six applications and turned them all down. The most rebates had been granted by Cardiff city council, which had approved all 12 applications it had received.

Although the uniform business rate is set centrally by the Treasury, it is collected locally by councils before being paid into a central pool for distribution across the country with government grant. Under the 1988 Local Government Finance Act, councils have the power to "reduce or remit" business rate payments if they are satisfied that the ratepayer would suffer hardship.

John Harris, policy chairman of the federation, said: "Business rates are an unfair tax not related to ability to pay. Businesses profits have been hit by the recession, yet their rates bills continue to go up. We fought long and hard for this relief but now we find that nine out of ten local authorities have pushed aside all thought of giving relief. Our survey shows how little local councils value their small business community."

According to environment department figures, £18,000 worth of rebates have been granted out of an annual business rate income of £15 billion. With more than 200 small firms closing each day, the time had come to extend the rebate scheme, Mr Harris said.

Local authorities are reluctant to award rebates because the government makes good only three quarters of the cost of a reduction, and the rest has to be passed on to poll tax payers. Rita Taylor, Conservative finance chairman of the Association of District Councils, said: "It is not true that we do not care about small businesses but we do have to protect the interests of all local taxpayers."

Michael Portillo, the local government minister, said that companies would have paid £1.8 billion more in rates over the past two years if councils had kept control of the rates. Attacking Labour's plans to restore control of business rates to town halls, he said that business would pay more.

David Blunkett, Labour's local government spokesman, rejected the figures as "dreamed up". Councils would be allowed to raise rates only in line with other increases in local taxation. Labour was committed to supporting small businesses. Cardiff city council gave a warning that it would have to cut services heavily because of £7.5 million of poll tax arrears. The Labour-controlled council has issued more than 82,000 summonses and obtained 65,000 liability orders.

Audit body accused, page 5

Orkney sex abuse claims 'all a lie'

A child who said that sex rituals took place in an Orkney quarry, leading to the seizure of nine children by social workers almost a year ago, later told her interviewer that the allegations were "all a lie" (Kerry Gill writes).

The contradiction emerged for the first time yesterday at the judicial enquiry into the seizures, when Liz McLean, aged 49, an official with the Royal Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, gave evidence about her so-called "disclosure interviews" with the three children who made the original accusations.

Miss McLean told the enquiry, before Lord Clyde in Kirkwall, that she thought the girl was testing her to see if she believed the stories of sexual rituals involving children, adults and the local Church of Scotland minister.

Miss McLean said that, a week before the other children were taken from their homes at dawn and flown to the Scottish mainland, the girl claimed that the allegations were a lie. The children were returned five weeks later.

Miss McLean told the enquiry: "At one point in this interview, she said: 'Did you know this was all a lie?' Asked by Donald Macfadyen, QC, counsel to the enquiry, what impression the remark had made on her, Miss McLean replied: 'I was on the floor beside her at the time and I looked at her. When she said it, she turned to me and looked up and smiled quietly and then we went on together with what she was doing.'

"I felt that I knew her well enough to form the impression that she was perhaps testing out myself and Linda Williamson [a policewoman], rather than meaning that all of what had gone before was a lie," Miss McLean said.

The enquiry continues today.

Drug dealer made £12 m

A drug dealer who had made £550,000 in the nine months since his release from prison was jailed for nine and a half years yesterday. John McLaughlin, aged 40, of Streatham, southwest London, admitted possessing heroin with intent to supply and having a gun as a convicted criminal.

Kington crown court was told that McLaughlin had nearly a kilo of heroin at home and another kilo in a safe deposit box when he was arrested driving a Mercedes car in Battersea, southwest London, on September 17.

Killer escapes from guards

A murderer who escaped from two prison guards at knife-point was being hunted by police last night. John McFadyen, aged 27, serving life for the murder of a drugs courier, was being driven under escort by hire car from Full Sutton prison near York to Wormwood Scrubs in London.

The Home Office said that McFadyen, who was handcuffed to one of the guards, pulled out a six knife. He forced the guards out of the car on the M1, and ordered the driver to take him to Euston, north London.

Defence move is cancelled

Plans to move more than 1,000 government defence staff from the South-East to Teesside have been cancelled. Kenneth Carlisle, the junior defence procurement minister, said that the decision would save £40 million.

The majority of the defence quality assurance staff, who were based at Woolwich and Bromley, southeast London, will now be merged into the Defence Research Agency establishments in Malvern, Hereford and Worcester, Farnborough and Fyestock, Hampshire, and Fort Halstead, Kent.

Rapist warned

A convicted rapist was warned by a judge that he faces life imprisonment after being found guilty of raping and attacking a girl aged 16 and seriously sexually assaulting a student aged 20. John Broom, aged 30, of Staple Hill, Bristol, will be sentenced in a fortnight. Bristol crown court was told that he had been jailed for five years in 1979 for raping a woman at gunpoint in Bristol.



Far horizons: Tony Stones lines up his bronze sculptures of Pacific discoverers before their dispatch to Expo 92 in Seville. From left: Captain Cook, de Bougainville, Abel Tasman, de Mendana, de Quiros, Magellan and Kupe, in Maori tradition the discoverer of New Zealand in AD 1,000

Skye bridge 'must be free'

BY KERRY GILL

TWO MPs yesterday called for a referendum over the proposed £25 million toll bridge to the Isle of Skye and said the islanders should wait for a toll-free bridge to be built out of public funds.

Brian Wilson, Labour's Scottish transport spokesman and Charles Kennedy, president of the Liberal Democrats, were speaking at the public enquiry into the proposal. Mr Wilson said that his party believed that the bridge was not being provided to improve communications for people travelling to Skye, but to get a foothold in Scotland for toll-funded projects.

He said that previous road bridges in the Highlands had taken their place in the queue for public funds. "We can see no rea-

son in logic why the approach to Skye should be any different. From the word go, however, the design and everything else to do with the project has had to be cost-led because of the over-riding requirement that the operator must get his outlay back, plus profit, within a plausible timescale."

Mr Wilson said that claims that there would be no Skye bridge for at least 20 years without private funding and high tolls were "famous and misleading". "The claim that this was the only way for Skye to get a bridge in less than 20 years does not appear to hold water. It was a scare tactic, used as a bludgeon."

Sir Iain Noble, the merchant banker and a landowner on the Isle of Skye,

argued that the proposed bridge was a waste of public money.

He told the enquiry that existing ferries were not only cheaper but added a certain mystique to Skye. "Why waste public money to provide a method of going across the Kyle which is less economic than the present ferry? I do not think the bridge is going to be a magic wand that brings prosperity to Skye. The public in Skye are coming out against the bridge in increasing numbers. But it seems the government will insist on having a facility which we do not want, to establish a principle."

Richard Cameron, Highland region's planning director, said that the concept of a bridge in an area of such high scenic quality was neither incongruous nor

Keays accuses Tories of hypocrisy over Parkinson scandal

SARA Keays told a High Court libel jury yesterday that her 11-year affair with Cecil Parkinson was no sex scandal. "The scandal in 1983 derived solely from the fact that Cecil Parkinson had concealed the truth about our affair and had allowed some pretty dreadful things to happen to save his political skin."

Her words pouring out in a torrent, she said: "If anything about my book can be said to be scandalous, it is the political... the lies... the hypocrisy of the Conservative party. I wish there would be public acknowledgment, certainly by the press, that those were the things which were scandalous."

Miss Keays, aged 44, who wrote a book, *A Question of Judgment*, about her affair with the former Conservative party chairman, said she was outraged and sickened by an article in *New Woman* which she claims labelled her as a kiss-and-tell bimbo. "I'm nothing of the kind."

Within minutes of starting her evidence on the second day of her libel action against the magazine, she was visibly angry when describing her feelings about the article in October 1989. She was "absolutely outraged" to be mentioned in an article on women

who made money by publishing revelations about their sex lives. The nine-man, three-woman jury has heard that the article put Miss Keays in the company of "pillow talkers" such as Fiona Wright — one-time lover of the former Burton boss Sir Ralph Halpern — the call girl Pamela Bordes and the former model Vicki Hodge.

In her damages action, Miss Keays, who has a daughter, Flora, now aged eight, by Mr Parkinson, claims the article accused her of writing a kiss-and-tell book to make money and cause maximum embarrassment and hurt to his reputation. She told the jury: "I bear absolutely no resemblance whatsoever to any woman described in this article."

The magazine's lies were the same as those "dished out" in 1983 and 1984, which made it necessary for her to write her book. "I am having to go through the whole thing again."

Asked by John Previne, QC, her counsel, what she thought about the suggestion in the article that money was part of her motive for writing her book, Miss Keays said: "If it was not so revolting, it would be ludicrous. There's nothing about the article, a single bit

of it concerning me, that is true, accurate or has any foundation in fact. None of it is justified. Money was no part of my motive for writing my book. If it had been, she could have made a great deal more than she did by going to an established publishing house rather than publishing it herself."

To her, the words "kiss and tell" meant telling the intimate details of a love affair. "Quite plainly I have never done that, either in my book or by any other means."

"The vast amount of my book is the political and personal consequences to me of my pregnancy and the birth of my child. I was incensed there should be an attempt to portray me as having toured — auctioned — my book. It's the absolute reverse of the truth."

Miss Keays, of Marksbury, Bath, described as "absolutely revolting" a suggestion in the article that her affair with Mr Parkinson was the "greatest political sex scandal in Britain since Profumo".

She said: "It's not the only time I've been mentioned in the same breath as the Profumo business, but the reference to him immediately suggests I may be the same kind of woman as the women with whom he was involved."

Asked about the article's coincidence that serialisation was timed to coincide with the Tory party conference, she said she did not even plan to serialise the book. It was just the way things turned out.

Wiping a tear from each eye, she said: "I was being urged to write it as quickly as possible and I wanted to get it finished because writing it was a very painful process. I wanted to get it over and done with. Then, in late May, my daughter developed epilepsy and her health deteriorated so rapidly I was not able to do a thing for some weeks. I was told she was going to be severely mentally handicapped and eventually destined for a life in an institution, so I had to finish this task."

Miss Keays said it seemed appropriate that the serialisation and the book should coincide with the 1985 Tory conference. "I wanted it to be read by as many people as possible, all the people who had read all the lies. Certainly it was vitally important it was going to be read by people with whom I had associated, worked, in the field which was my chosen career — politics — all the people who had known me well, had stood by and done nothing when I was horribly attacked in 1983, people who had tried to destroy my reputation."

"I wanted it read by them above all, and the reporters in the media, people who willingly carried their lies to the wider public."

Miss Keays continues her evidence today.



Hire purchases: Andy Edmonds, of the auctioneers Henry Butcher, gives a final polish to one of about 200 taxis to be sold tomorrow in North Fetham, west London. They should fetch from £200 for a 1976 cab to £10,000 for a current model

Publican had gun to deter gangsters

BY MICHAEL HORNSNELL AND STEWART TENDLER

A TERRIFIED publican who armed himself with a handgun to frighten protection racketeers won the sympathy of an Old Bailey judge who gave him a 12 months conditional discharge yesterday.

Anthony Curtis, aged 47, bought the weapon and ammunition after his pub in the East End of London was attacked by arsonists.

Shortly after that incident a friend and fellow publican was murdered — "chopped to pieces" by gangsters with a machete after he refused to pay protection money, the court was told.

Judge Coombe, QC, said: "Dealing with dangerous criminals like this, he is in a dilemma. It makes one wonder when the time will come for licensees to have firearms."

In July last year police executed a search warrant on an unconnected matter found the gun and ammunition hidden in a sock. Mr Curtis, of previous good character, admitted the gun was his, explaining that he bought it for protection. He said he would not have had the nerve to use it and just wanted to frighten extortionists.

As a result of his arrest, Mr Curtis, who now lives in Kent, lost his livelihood. He pleaded guilty to possessing a firearm and ammunition without a certificate in July last year. His plea of not guilty to a more serious charge of possessing a firearm with intent to endanger life was accepted by the Crown.

Judge Coombe said: "This is quite an exceptional case. I wouldn't dream of sending this man to prison. The trouble is that law-abiding citizens are not allowed to take

the law into their own hands. He really was put into an impossible position, but I think if I give him a conditional discharge justice would be done."

Judge Coombe then took the unusual step of asking the legal aid committee to reconsider the contribution Mr Curtis had already made in view of the fact that he was now unemployed.

Outside the court, Mr Curtis said that he would never be given a licence to become a publican in London again.

Murder squad detectives are still investigating the killing of his friend, Alan Brooks, licensee of the Clydesdale public house at Loughton, Essex, in July last year.

More than two dozen East End public houses have been recent victims of protection rackets run by criminal families, according to members of a special police squad investigating middle-ranking gangs and criminals with aspirations to become powerful in the East End. Breweries are thought to have turned a blind eye to the operations of the gangs, which have resulted in public house licensees going to men with criminal records.

The National Licensed Victuallers' Association said the case highlighted the dangers faced by publicans but said members should tell the police and not break the law. Richard Coyle, vice-chairman of the Police Federation, said last night: "I am not interfering with the right of the judge to sentence. But it seems strange in this day and age of increasing violence that someone in illegal possession of a handgun can walk away from a court."

Britain could end rabies quarantine

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

GOVERNMENT veterinary officials are discussing moves to ease Britain's tough anti-rabies regulations as part of attempts to dismantle frontier controls in the European Community from the start of next year, it emerged yesterday.

Keith Meldrum, the chief veterinary officer, said: "We are looking at the possibility of removing the requirement for quarantine for domestic dogs and cats and relying instead on vaccination to provide protection against rabies. But discussions are still at an early stage."

Such a change would enable British nationals to travel abroad with their pets and then return home without having to put their animals into quarantine for six months. But animal welfare experts and some local authorities are worried that any weakening of the rules might allow the lethal disease into Britain.

Other EC member states have long been pressing for a relaxation of Britain's strict quarantine laws, which also apply to commercial animals and are widely seen abroad as an unfair and unnecessary restriction on trade. Internationally available vaccines, they say, can provide adequate protection.

"The problem with rabies in animals, as opposed to humans, is that if the animal is exposed to infection before vaccination takes place, it may still succumb," Mr Meldrum said. "So you have to have time constraints to ensure that the animal will not develop the disease after entry into a rabies-free country."

There are modern inactivated rabies vaccines which

are effective, but the question is whether they are so effective as to remove the need for quarantine. The evidence I have seen so far suggests that they are effective for dogs but not quite so effective in cats. One option might be to go for a mix of vaccination and quarantine."

Mr Meldrum said that vaccination would have to be coupled with blood tests to ensure that protective antibodies were present, as well as documentary proof that the animal had not been exposed previously to the disease. "We are still studying whether that would give us the same level of protection as quarantine," he added.

At present, pets entering Britain must be placed in quarantine under the Rabies (Import of Cats, Dogs and other Mammals) Order 1974. Anyone caught smuggling a pet into Britain can be fined up to £2,000 and the animal may be destroyed. In 1990, 59 dogs and 40 cats were detected being imported illegally.

There are fears that the Channel tunnel could allow rabies-infected wild animals, such as bats and foxes, into Britain despite elaborate measures, including electrified grids and fences, to prevent this. Since the second world war, rabies has spread widely in continental Europe and has been detected in animals in France within ten miles of the Channel.

The EC's scientific veterinary committee, which includes officials from all member states, is expected to issue a report later this month on rabies control and other animal health issues raised by the advent of the single market.

Longest trial ends with three guilty

BY CRAIG SETON

THE jury in the longest criminal trial ever heard in England and Wales returned its final verdicts yesterday at the end of a fraud case that began 18 months ago.

The legal marathon started at Nottingham crown court on September 10, 1990, and was held over 252 working days at an estimated cost of £3 million. While it continued, Margaret Thatcher was replaced by John Major, the Gulf War came and went, and the Soviet Union disintegrated.

The trial ended with only 11 jurors after one was excused earlier for personal reasons. Mr Justice Potter yesterday told the remaining six women and five men that they would be excused jury service for the rest of their lives.

Acknowledging that it was officially the longest single trial to have taken place, he told the jury: "I thank you for the quite remarkable care, attention and patience you have shown. You have been the most durable jury that one could have hoped for."

The case arose out of the collapse of the Britannia theme park near Heanor, Derbyshire, in 1985, with debts estimated at £9 million. The prosecution came after an investigation by Derbyshire police costing £1.8 million into allegations of fraudulent trading, obtaining money by deception and other counts of fraud involving a number of companies.

The jury considered its verdicts for seven days. Peter Kellard, aged 57, of Bourne-mouth, was convicted of 19 fraud charges and acquitted of three. Edward Dwyer, aged 54, also of Bourne-mouth and Mr Kellard's second in command, was found guilty of six charges. John Wright, aged 56, the park's former chairman, from Norwich, was convicted of five charges and cleared on one. They will be sentenced tomorrow.

Keith Emmett, aged 55, a businessman, from Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, was acquitted last week of three charges and walked free.

The opening and closing speeches of Timothy Barnes, QC, for the prosecution, lasted a total of 75 hours spread over 17 days. He had told the jury that Kellard was the driving force behind the fraud, which tricked investors into parting with millions of pounds.

The theme park was meant to be a celebration of the best of British invention and achievement, but had remained open for less than three months and had been built on a mixture of "wishful thinking, gross exaggeration and downright lies".

The jury was told that when the park was placed in receivership by Samuel Montagu, the merchant bankers, which had lent it £3.7 million, the deficiency to 605 unsecured creditors was £4.75 million and the deficiency to secured creditors was £4.6 million.

The prosecution said that Kellard convinced investors that his Bourne-mouth-based company KLF had available funds. The opening day of the park had been chaotic, with creditors besieging KLF staff.

Playtime 'banned' at autistic centre

BY RONALD FAIR

A NURSERY nurse at a Lancashire day centre for autistic children yesterday described her feelings of shock and misery when she worked at the centre for six weeks in 1983.

Rosemary Dobson told the second day of the enquiry into allegations of abuse at Scothforth House centre that love and security were withheld from the children. A member of staff referred to as Teacher One, who was in charge of the centre, had told Mrs Dobson that autistic children responded to firmness and strictness and had to be motivated. "She told me this was the only way they would achieve and that you had to keep on at them and not give up for a moment," she said. The children were not allowed to play because, according to thinking at the centre, they did not know how to.

Mrs Dobson described Teacher One's attitude as "sarcastic and humiliating" if a child was being awkward. "I felt miserable that this should be the only way of handling autistic children."

Mrs Dobson recalled an incident at mealtime when a young boy was sick. "Teacher One was there and she went hysterical and screamed at him. 'You filthy, disgusting, horrible boy', and this little boy was shaking with fright, with terror on his face. It was the way she said it and the words she used. I was in tears," Mrs Dobson said.

She told the enquiry, which was ordered by Lancashire county council after three members of staff were convicted of cruelty and assault against children, that she had not seen any force-feeding or children being fed their own vomit, as had been claimed by another nursery nurse yesterday. Mrs Dobson said that she had no criticism of any other member of staff except Teacher One.

"I know you have to be firm with autistic children," Mrs Dobson said. "For academic achievement, you sometimes have to be quite tough on them, but it was the mental cruelty which was used to achieve the aim that I think was misguided."

Kim Blythe, a registered nurse from Sheffield who was seconded to Scothforth House in 1987, said that a member of staff had tried to keep a record of incidents at the centre, "but one person in a regime run like a concentration camp, if you like, can do very little". Of Teacher One, she said: "At times she actually frightened me, so she must have terrified the children."

She said that she had been prevented from cuddling a five-year-old boy and was shouted at when she tried to take toys from a cupboard for the children. A three-year-old boy was force-fed milk every day and a five-year-old boy who disliked milk had the carton squeezed over him. He was then slapped and told off for being messy, she said. The enquiry continues today.

Princess rebuked for buying Mercedes

BY ALAN HAMILTON

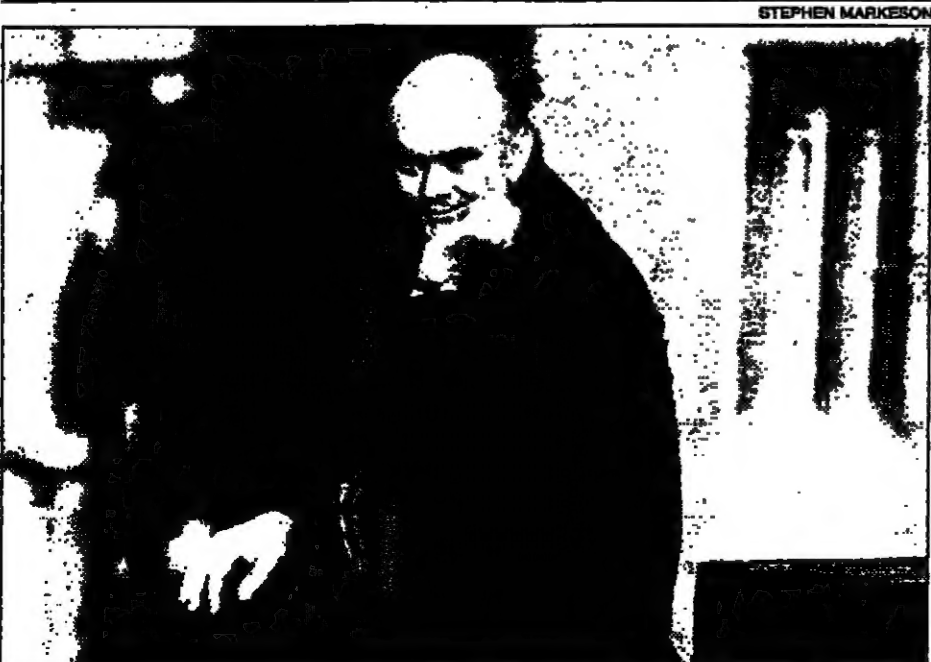
THE Princess of Wales was accused yesterday of lacking patriotism by forsaking the British motor industry and taking delivery of a German-built Mercedes sports car.

The princess is said to have fallen in love with the £72,000 open-top roadster when it was unveiled at the Earls Court Motorfair last year. She has sold her previous private car, a Coventry-made Jaguar XJS.

Anthony Beaumont-Dark, Tory MP for Birmingham Selly Oak, said that it was astonishing that the princess should abandon Jaguar when it was losing £200 million and hundreds of jobs. "I would have thought the princess would have thought it appropriate to support the British motor industry and not, bluntly, to pull the rug from under it."

Dennis Skinner, Labour MP for Bolsover, said that the decision was another example of the royal family showing contempt for British workers. "They live off the fat of the land with taxpayers' money coming from British workers, and then they spit in their faces," Jimmy Airlie, motor industry negotiator for the Amalgamated Engineering Union, said the decision was at best insensitive.

At best insensitive.



Seat of learning: Alan Ayckbourn at the Martyrs Memorial, Oxford, after taking the Cameron Mackintosh chair of contemporary theatre yesterday

Isles profit from tourists blown in by bank collapse

BY KERRY GILL

THE Presbyterian gloom that overshadows the Outer Hebridean psyche, and which has deepened since the islands council lost £24 million invested in the collapsed Bank of Credit and Commerce International, lifted yesterday when it was learnt that the financial difficulty has caused a boom in tourism.

The welter of publicity over the council's investment has led to enquiries from tourists around the world eager to know more about

the archipelago, which stretches from the Roman Catholic south to the Presbyterian islands of North Uist and Lewis and Harris.

Appropriately for an area where a gale is recorded one day in six, Catriona Earons, director of tourism, said: "It is an ill wind... at least we can thank BCCI for something. People suddenly began reading about the Western Isles and thought 'We've heard of that place' and began getting in touch."

There has been so much interest that the tourist office has had to order an extra 10,000 holiday brochures.

More than 100,000 tourists visited the islands last year and it is hoped that this figure will be doubled this season, attracting badly needed income. Islanders face having to pay an annual £2.7 million for the next 30 years to service the loan taken out to cover the BCCI loss.

The European Community, from which the islanders have benefited hugely, this year earmarked £1.4 million to help them and their neighbours on Skye to create employment, mainly in tourism. The EC has also provided money for the

islands' programme of road, water and drainage improvements.

Mrs Earons said that most visitors were interested in fishing, walking, wildlife and the scenery. Although the islands boast some of the most beautiful beaches in Europe, they are usually deserted — probably because the average July temperature on Harris struggles to reach 13°C.

Holidays in the Western Isles are not for the sybarite used to the Mediterranean. A recently introduced attraction is working on a croft. Visitors can also cleanse

their souls and help the beleaguered economy by spending up to seven days digging peat, herding sheep and learning Gaelic, the islands' first language.

Donald Macleod, the former finance director who was sacked by the council in the wake of the BCCI loss, began his appeal yesterday against the dismissal. The council has set up a 15-strong appeals committee. George Macleod, who was sacked as chief executive, will appeal later this month.

Leading article, page 11

Hope of wiping out leprosy

BY THOMSON PRENTICE, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

A NEW fast-acting cocktail of drugs could help to wipe out leprosy, the World Health Organisation said yesterday. An experimental combination of two powerful antibiotics is to be launched in international trials this month and could reduce treatment duration from up to four years to four weeks.

Hiroshi Nakajima, director-general of the organisation, said: "This should make leprosy treatment far more acceptable to the many patients who balk at taking drugs for months or years. It brings the possibility of wiping out the disease much closer."

Leprosy is known to affect more than three million people in more than 90 coun-

tries. The organisation believes that the true total may be twice as high because the disease carries such a stigma that many sufferers are reluctant to seek medical help.

The disease is caused by a bacterium that takes up to 20 years to display symptoms. Despite its fearsome reputation, leprosy is curable, only slightly contagious, and does not always cause deformities. It attacks the skin and nerves and can lead to blindness and the loss of fingers and toes.

India, with more than two million known sufferers, has the highest incidence of the disease, followed by Brazil and Nigeria. Trials of the new combination of drugs will be held in seven countries, including Brazil, Kenya and

Pakistan, involving about 4,000 patients. The treatment, given orally, consists of a new antibiotic, ofloxacin, developed over the past five years, and rifampicin, which has been the mainstay of leprosy and tuberculosis treatment for many years.

The aim of the trials is to prove that the drug can kill any mutant strains of the leprosy bacillus resistant to rifampicin more quickly than other drug combinations. If the treatment is shown to be effective, it could attract patients in remote areas who are deterred by the prospect of compliance with months or years of standard therapy, and could wipe out the disease "sometime in the next century", WHO officials say.

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Taxes distort price of cars in British showrooms

By KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

CAR prices in Britain are boosted by some of the highest taxes in Europe, a survey by *The Times* has discovered on the eve of the publication of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigation into the pricing policies of motor manufacturers.

Peter Lilley, the trade secretary, will disclose today the results of the 18-month enquiry into allegations that cars in UK showrooms can be 30 per cent more expensive than the same models abroad. Manufacturers claim that the burden of UK taxes, with the addition of a special car tax and value-added tax at 17.5 per cent, is a distorting factor.

Special car tax, first levied in 1973 as a temporary measure, is a complex calculation paid at 10 per cent on five-sixths of the manufacturer's wholesale price (a sixth is left as a presumed average profit margin for the dealer). The special car tax on a £7,643 Ford Escort 1.4i three-door hatchback adds £636.92. Value-added tax, an extra £1,449, is then levied to make the retail price £9,729. That makes the total tax loading £2,085.92, or 27.3 per cent of the wholesale price.

A check by correspondents for *The Times* in six European capitals shows that only Britain levies a special tax on cars. In Belgium, VAT is 25 per cent while France is reducing it from 22 to 18.6 per cent this year. Italy's VAT rate is 19 per cent. The Netherlands levies 18.5 and Germany 14 per cent.

The effect of higher taxes in the UK makes initial prices

higher here but the desperation to sell cars during the recession has led to discounts of up to £5,000, which help to give British buyers the most flexibility in negotiating a deal with their local garage.

We checked on the likely transaction prices, including local taxes, of two cars: a Ford Fiesta 1.1 five door and a Vauxhall Astra 1.4 five door.

The list price of the Fiesta at East One Ford in east London was £9,675 for a model that included a sunroof, six-speaker radio cassette, upgraded tyres and central locking. A discount of more than £1,000 was offered on the telephone and in the showroom a demonstrator model was offered at £7,972.

A Vauxhall salesman at Mann Egerton, at Radlett, Hertfordshire, gave the price of an Astra Merit at £8,999 over the telephone, and suggested a showroom visit to "crunch some numbers".

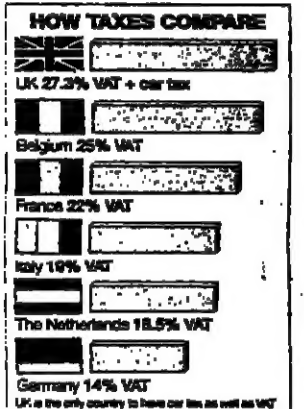
In The Netherlands, the Fiesta was £7,291. A radio and sunroof would make the price £7,725. No finance deals were on offer. The Astra was £10,157 with a radio costing £124 more and sunroof at £502 with another £400 needed for a catalytic converter, standard in the UK, making a final price of £11,183.

In Germany, the £6,682 Fiesta was fully equipped. The Astra at £7,273 needed a £243 stereo and sunroof at £522, taking the final price to £8,038.

In France, the Fiesta was £6,571 with stereo but sunroof was a £222 option. Everything else, such as central locking, was a cost option. The £7,489 Astra had a basic radio but needed a £322 sunroof.

In Italy, the Fiesta cost £6,527. No extras were included. A sunroof cost £200, while the radio was negotiable. The Astra was £8,525 with stereo, although a sunroof was £277.

In Belgium, the Fiesta was £6,100 with a sunroof and tinted windows. A stereo cost £293. A stereo for the £7,537 Astra added £267 and a sunroof £401, taking the final price to £8,205.



On their toes: members of the Ballet du Nord rehearsing at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, central London. Although the French company has visited Britain before, last night marked its debut in the capital, where the 32 members are presenting three 20th century ballets until Saturday. The company, created in 1983, has given more than 500 performances on world tours

Organic farmers seek subsidies for growing less

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

PAYING farmers to grow less food would be a better, cheaper and politically more acceptable way of curbing over-production than paying them to grow none at all, the government will be told today.

Leaders of the organic farming lobby are to meet John Gummer, the agriculture minister, to seek financial aid for farmers who stop using fertilisers, pesticides and other yield boosting chemicals.

Patrick Holden, of British Organic Farmers, and Richard Young, of the Soil Association, will propose that farmers meeting government standards for organic agriculture should have a basic subsidy of £45 an acre. They argue that this would be more cost effective than paying up to £90 an acre under the European Community's "set aside" scheme for taking land out of production.

Mr Young, who produces beef, pork and cereals on an organic farm in the Cotswolds, said: "It seems unbelievable that Britain almost alone in Europe is providing no central support for organic production, a natural and viable way of producing food which uses no synthetic pesticides, when it is happy to spend £2 billion on removing pesticides from drinking water."

Mr Gummer will be told today that set aside, which cost taxpayers £22 million in 1991-2, is neither popular nor effective. Its main weakness is that farmers do not have to let all their land lie fallow and can use the grants to increase crop output on the acreage left in production.

"We estimate that set aside is less than 50 per cent effective in terms of reducing output and that payments to organic farmers equal to half the set-aside rate would be more cost effective and bring environmental and political benefits too," Mr Young said. "The subsidy would also enable us to lower the high prices we have to charge consumers for organic produce."

The output per acre of organic farming can be as little as half that of conventional farming and farmers have to depend on charging up to 100 per cent more for their produce. That has limited the market for organic food, which accounts for no more than 1 per cent of all food sales and is mostly imported.

Professor Michael Murphy, head of the agricultural economics unit at Cambridge University, who is finalising a report for the government on the viability of organic farming, said yesterday: "If there is an unsatisfied market for organic food that we are now importing, then it makes sense to give some start-up help to farmers who want to convert, but this is not something we should be throwing money at."

"A payment of £45 an acre would be exceedingly generous — more than the profits now being made by most organic farmers. One has to ask why the taxpayer should subsidise a product that forms such a small part of most people's diet."

Other awards included: film actor, Kenneth Branagh; film actress, Julie Walters; stage actors, Derek Jacobi and Robert Lindsay for *Becket*; stage actress, Vanessa Redgrave; BBC TV personality, Clive James; BBC Radio personality, Steve Wright; Independent Radio personality, Chris Tarrant; best recording artist, Seal; special award for services to entertainment, Lewis Gilbert.

Waste-cutters accused of staff inefficiency

By DOUGLAS BROOM, LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE Audit Commission was accused yesterday of flouting the standards it sets for others by increasing staff at the expense of efficiency.

A report by the Labour-controlled Association of London Authorities claimed that the commission, which is responsible for reducing waste in local government spending, had increased its headquarters staff by 190 per cent since its formation in 1983.

At the same time, a political row broke out over Labour's plans to replace the commission with a Quality Commission. Michael Portillo, local government minister, accused David Blunkett, his Labour opposite number, of attempting to settle "old scores" by reducing the commission's powers.

Mr Blunkett rejected as "childish and factually wrong" the suggestion that he was motivated by his experience of being

scrutinised by the commission when he was leader of Sheffield council.

The ALA report accuses the commission of overpaying its staff. The commission's salary bill had risen by 110 per cent in real terms, although its staff had increased by only 76 per cent, it says. Local authorities had to "foot the bill" through the £38 million audit fees they paid to the commission each year.

The commission responded that most of the increase in staff had been due to the extension of its remit last year to take in auditing of the national health service. Of 230 people employed by the health department to regulate spending, the commission had taken on 160, although the job of auditing the health service had added the work of 300 people.

Mr Portillo said that Labour's proposals for a

Quality Commission would reduce auditors' power and independence.

"The Labour party clearly does not want to subject its colleagues in local government to such close scrutiny," he said. "Need we ask why when, in the mid-Eighties, Sheffield was one of the authorities the Audit Commission scrutinised? I suppose that David Blunkett found that rather a chastening experience and he is now about settling old scores."

Mr Blunkett said that in 1985, Sir John Banham, then controller of the commission, had called Sheffield the best-run local authority.

The Labour party later produced an extract from Sir John's speech in which he said: "The best public services are superb and cannot be equalled by the private sector, with Sheffield as a shining example."

Teacher is freed after assaults

A teacher who admitted indecently assaulting five boys aged between eight and 11 walked free yesterday after a judge gave him a suspended prison sentence, a decision later condemned by parents as being too lenient.

Michael Thomas, aged 62, of Alford, Lincolnshire, taught for 40 years before retiring in 1988. Chris Metcalfe, for the prosecution, told Grimsby crown court. Three of the assaults took place at the Lacey Gardens school, Louth, and two others at Seathorne junior school, at Skegness, Lincolnshire.

Thomas, who pleaded guilty to the charges, was jailed for 15 months, suspended for two years. Four similar charges, which he had denied, were left on file.

Shotgun ruling

The Marquess of Blandford, aged 35, was given a conditional discharge for possessing a shotgun without a certificate. Magistrates at Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire, were told that the gun was found by police searching his home in the grounds of Blenheim palace after a suspected burglary.

Remand death

Simon Straw, aged 20, was found hanged in his cell at the Glen Parva young offenders' centre near Leicester, where he was being held on remand. It is the fifth death at the centre since 1988.

A bat no more

The last mouse-eared bat in Britain has been declared dead by bat watchers who have not seen it at its home in a disused tunnel between Chichester and Midhurst, West Sussex, for two years.

Great knitters

Women pensioners in the Knit-and-Natter Club at Balderton, Nottinghamshire, have knitted a 400ft long scarf, which took nine months to complete.

Historic flight

An American A-10 "tank-buster" aircraft used in the Gulf war arrives tomorrow at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford, Cambridgeshire.

Larkins keep it in the family

THE Larkins celebrated yesterday after four actors playing leading members of the fictional television family were named ITV personalities of the year. *The Darling Buds of May*, the first show to top the television ratings for all six episodes of its first series, so impressed the Variety Club that it named the four stars jointly for the award.

David Jason, who plays Pop Larkin, was unable to attend the ceremony lunch, which was hosted at the Hilton Hotel, London, by Jonathan Ross the chat show presenter, because of filming commitments on a detective series. But Pam Ferris, who plays Ma Larkin, said: "It's amazing, but it is justified that the four of us won it so that it's not as embarrassing as just one having it. I'm very thrilled by this charming gesture and I am totally stunned." The award was



Winners: Pam Ferris and Catherine Zeta Jones

also shared by Catherine Zeta Jones, who plays Mariette, and Philip Frankel, her screen husband Charlie.

Cilla Black was named showbusiness personality. She said of the award: "I used to think they only gave it to old people, but then I realised this is my 29th year in showbusiness, so I suppose I am old."

Other awards included:

film actor, Kenneth Branagh; film actress, Julie Walters; stage actors, Derek Jacobi and Robert Lindsay for *Becket*; stage actress, Vanessa Redgrave; BBC TV personality, Clive James; BBC Radio personality, Steve Wright; Independent Radio personality, Chris Tarrant; best recording artist, Seal; special award for services to entertainment, Lewis Gilbert.

Train driving myth runs out of steam

CHILDREN do not want to be train drivers any more. After more than a century of holding pride of place in the career aspirations of the very young, rail managers now face the task of creating a new image for an occupation that has lost its romantic appeal.

With more than half of train drivers over the age of 50, British Rail will have lost about 70 per cent of what was once regarded as its elite staff through retirement by the end of the decade. Finding replacements in a competitive labour market at a time when everyone appears to hate BR is not going to be easy.

Historically, recruitment presented few difficulties. The image of the noble driver riding the footplate of the Bristol to London express as he brought his steam-driven beast into Paddington station was enough to ensure that the railways had a constant stream of aspiring applicants.

Low pay and a declining image add up to a serious shortage of candidates for the footplate, Michael Dynes writes

Changing patterns of employment in the great railway centres such as Crewe, York and Swindon have deprived BR of its natural pool of labour. It now finds itself looking for staff to take on the responsibility of driving a train, which can carry more than twice the number of passengers as a jumbo jet, for a basic salary of £10,300 in a labour market where a washing machine engineer can earn £15,000.

Rail staff would traditionally serve up to 20 years as firemen before graduating to driving trains. Long apprenticeships helped to create pride in their work, which was in turn reinforced by the high status train drivers held in society. Drivers still take great pride in what they do, but society has withdrawn its esteem, and

BR does not have 20 years to train the next generation of drivers.

The declining image of the train driver has been exacerbated by the series of rail accidents, particularly the Clapham Junction tragedy, which occurred towards the end of the 1980s. While the railways have always been quick to acknowledge error, many drivers complain that society operates double standards. A train driver who causes an accident by passing a red light can be sent to prison, while the 5,000 deaths on the roads each year appear to be tolerated with equanimity.

BR's attempts to attract high quality staff on low salaries are little short of absurd. Soon, however, that could change dramatically. Under the drivers' restructuring initiative, BR is proposing to increase the basic salary to £13,300, boosting average earnings, including performance bonuses, flexible working arrangements and increased productivity, to about £19,000.

The restructuring deal currently being negotiated between BR and the rail unions also includes an overhaul of how train drivers are taught. BR wants to replace part-time driver training with full-time training programmes, offer drivers clearly defined career structures and allow managers to recruit from outside the industry.

The transition from antiquated to modern working practices could take many years to complete, but the attempt to re-establish the prestige once enjoyed by train drivers will be every bit as important to the long-term future of the railways, whoever owns them, as billions of pounds of new investment.

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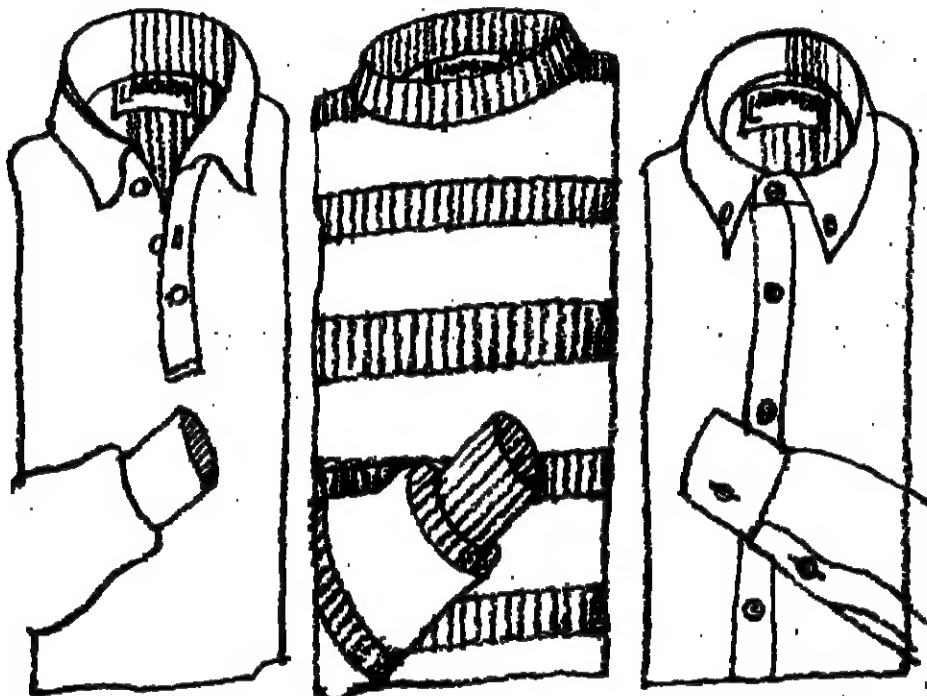
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Heseltine predicts £60 on poll tax under Labour

The environment secretary challenged Opposition MPs to say how they would fund extra public spending.
Peter Mulhigan and John Winder write

LABOUR would have to put an extra £60 on every poll tax bill or a penny on income tax to pay for its public spending pledges, Michael Heseltine told the Commons last night.

The environment secretary challenged Labour MPs to say which they would do to fund the extra £2 billion being called for by local authorities.

In a debate on local government finance in which he struck an electrifying note, he accused Labour-controlled local authorities of being less efficient at collecting the poll tax.

“This is not a problem unique to the community charge as the very selfsame authorities generally had the worst record on rate collections as well. They would be no better under Labour's fair

rates scheme if it were ever introduced.

Mr Heseltine said that efficient local authorities would be able to set a community charge at or near £257 next year. “But inefficient local authorities will charge more, and it is interesting to note that 18 of the 20 highest community charges in the country this year have been set by Labour-controlled local authorities.”

Mr Heseltine said councils should press on with action

against poll tax defaulters while the law was changed to remove doubts about the admissibility in court of computer evidence. There would be no amnesty for defaulters, and those who appealed to a higher court were unlikely to succeed. The government is to introduce amendments to the Local Government Finance Bill, now in the House of Lords, to remove doubts about computer evidence.

In the meantime, local authorities could carry on pursuing non-payers by agreeing dates for their appearance in court after the bill becomes law, probably next month.

Bryan Gould, the shadow environment secretary, accused the government of using figures based on calculations that were irrelevant and misleading when deciding central government contributions to local government. He asked why it was that, in calculating the standard spending assessment, it was assumed that it cost £1,148 in Manchester and £857 in Wigan to deliver the same standard level of service.

The system was unacceptable in the scope it offered to the environment secretary to manipulate it for party advantage. Mr Heseltine had sanctioned a rate of increase of standard spending assessments, for next year over this year, of 25 per cent more for Conservative local authorities than for Labour. He had found a way in an election year to provide advantage to authorities of the right political colour.

“We are... dealing with a secretary of state who is a ruthless and unprincipled party politician, who could not tell you the time without also warning you that under Labour every hour will be reduced to 58 minutes,” Mr Gould said.

“Even for him it is breathtaking check to link to Labour the high levels of local taxation.”

Tories woo youth with new deal

By NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE prime minister will launch a direct appeal for Britain's youth vote this weekend as he outlines a package of measures designed to appeal to young people.

John Major will set out to woo the next generation at the Young Conservatives' conference in Eastbourne by detailing education and training plans for a fourth term of Tory rule. Conservative election planners see the conference, which will be addressed by roughly half the cabinet, as a critical milestone towards securing their favoured game-plan of a April 9 election.

Insiders disclosed yesterday that the central themes will be youth, dynamism and the Conservative vision for another five years in power. Ministers have been ordered to trail important manifesto announcements and to crystallise their ideas for a fourth term. Attention will be drawn to the relative youth of Mr

Major's cabinet in an attempt to rebut Labour's campaign theme that after 13 years in power the Tories have become a spent force.

The conference comes against the background of a new opinion poll suggesting that the Tories have clawed back some of Labour's traditional lead among six million first-time voters, roughly half of whom can be expected to turn out on polling day. An ICM poll for Today put the Opposition ahead of the government by 47-33 per cent among the 18-24 age group, rather narrower a lead than the 43-27 advantage Neil Kinnock enjoyed before the last election. Intriguingly, the poll also suggested that while Labour led among 21- to 24-year-olds, the Tories were ahead among those aged 18 to 20. Mr Major had a stronger personal following than Mr Kinnock or Paddy Ashdown.

Mr Major's longer-term tracking of the age group is less comforting for the Tories. It found that Labour enjoyed an average ten-point lead among 18- to 24-year-olds in 1991, suggesting a 3.5 per cent swing to the Opposition since the 1987 election.

Mr Major will set the tone for the Eastbourne gathering on Thursday in a late-night BBC Radio 1 appearance in which he will beef up the staple rock music diet with his promises of a better deal for the 18-25 age group. Education and training, new moves to tackle crime and the Tory vision for Europe will be among the main areas where ministers will seek to demonstrate that they are bubbling over with ideas.

The Eastbourne conference will pave the way for an offensive on education and training next week to be spearheaded by Kenneth Clarke and Michael Howard. The education secretary, who has won right-wing plaudits for his assault on the educational establishment, will be presented as the man who has turned the educational tide for the Tories.

The Conservatives will then seek to switch the pre-election political agenda on to trade union reform, with occasional forays into areas such as health and local government, before returning to Labour's public spending plans in the run-up to the Budget on March 10.

The Conservatives believe that Labour has erred by making “13 wasted years of Tory rule” the bedrock of its election campaigning. They think that such an approach too easily resurrects some of the successes of the 1980s.



Labour lesson: Neil Kinnock explaining his education policies yesterday. He attacked 13 years of “fads and failed experiments”. Full story, page 1

Hurd spells out priorities for EC

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

DOUGLAS Hurd said yesterday that the government, if re-elected, would use its presidency of the European Community to speed up the entry of new members.

Setting out his priorities for the six-month presidency starting in July, the foreign secretary predicted swift progress by the end of the year in preparing the mandates for entry by members of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), followed by the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe.

Some of the EFTA countries, such as Austria, Norway and Sweden, could join by 1996, and Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia by 2000. Mr Hurd said: “They may not all want to join. It is not all a bed of roses in the community.”

Giving evidence on the Maastricht treaty to the Commons foreign affairs committee, Mr Hurd also indicated

that the agreement, together with a larger, more diverse membership, might stifle the growth of EC bureaucracy. “I personally find it difficult to imagine a community of 18 having a centralised structure going far beyond what we have now. It would become top heavy and unmanageable.”

After their visit to EC institutions last week, many of the MPs complained at the commission's increased interference in the affairs of member states. David Howell, the chairman, hoped that the Maastricht deal would thwart the sensation of a “constant drift to the centre”. Michael Jay, a Foreign Office assistant under secretary, said he believed some senior EC commissioners were already arguing against some proposals on the grounds that they covered issues best dealt with nationally.

Housing reforms planned

MORTGAGE relief would be phased out and replaced by a new housing cost relief system for those on low incomes under a Liberal Democrat government (Jill Sherman writes).

Those on lower incomes would qualify for more relief the less they earned, whether they were buying or renting, but the party would abolish any housing relief for those earning over £27,000. Under the scheme, which would be phased in over 25 years, people with existing mortgages would be able to choose between housing cost relief or mortgage interest tax relief.

Other proposals outlined in the Liberal Democrat manifesto include a rescue scheme to convert mortgages into rent for those in danger of losing their home. A law would be introduced to allow homes which have been left empty for more than a year to be used for housing.

‘Parachute’ candidate crash-lands

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Liberal Democrats have hit a legal obstacle in their last-minute efforts to find 40 more candidates for the general election. One prospective parliamentary candidate is threatening a judicial review because he was deselected after failing to follow the rules governing “parachute” candidates.

The party, which is contesting 634 seats, has drawn up a shortlist of about 50 people who can be called on at short notice to fill vacancies. Its election planners anticipate having to “parachute” in candidates in about 12 seats where the normal selection procedure has come unstuck.

In a dispute highlighting the Liberal Democrats' difficulties in fielding a full election team, Aubrey Ross was chosen for Leeds South and Morley in December to fight Labour's replacement for Mervyn Rees, the former home secretary, who had a 6,711 majority in 1987. Mr Ross, who had earlier been put on the “parachute” list of centrally approved candidates, ran into difficulties with his local party. Last week his local



Wilson: sending in the troops

party chairman wrote to him saying that he had been deselected because under the party's rules as a “parachute candidate” he was not supposed to campaign before an election was called.

Mr Ross has now written to Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrats' leader, asking to be reinstated and claiming the party was in a state of confusion. “I

am now considering asking for a judicial review on my deselection,” Mr Ross said yesterday.

Des Wilson, the party's campaign director, admitted that with only weeks remaining before a possible election, 40 seats still had no candidate in place. In most constituencies the selection process was well under way. However, 12 seats were likely to go to candidates nominated centrally and hustled into place for polling day. The parachute candidates, who will not be placed until a general election is called, could have only three weeks to campaign.

Jennifer Pearce, chairman of the English candidates committee, said most had opted to go on the last-minute list because family or business commitments made it difficult for them to spend more time campaigning. In a handful of cases people with little or no experience of electioneering had been put on the parachute list and told not to campaign before the election.

Mr Ross, who stood for the Conservatives in Openshaw, Manchester, in 1974, said he had ample experience to campaign and accused his local party of “minding” him too much.

Threat to UN relief

Sudan rebels plunder food aid supplies

FROM SAM KILEY IN NASIR, SOUTHERN SUDAN

REBELS from the Sudanese People's Liberation Army are stealing thousands of tons of United Nations food sent to feed refugees in the south of the country.

The UN and other officials say that the army (SPLA) and the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SRRA), its civilian wing, are feeding the entire garrison of Nasir, the headquarters of Commander Rik Machar, with food stolen from refugees. Commander Rik fell out with Dr John Garang, the head of the liberation army, last year and aid officials say that the Nasir faction of the rebel movement is the worst offender for theft of food supplies.

"We only beg what food we can from our families, everything else we get from our own farms or we buy it," Commander Rik said when he was asked about the allegations of theft.

But in Nasir, a town on the banks of the Salongo which has to endure seasonal flooding, there are no signs of intensive agriculture and the liberation army guerrillas can be seen eating high-energy porridge which has been sent for child refugees.

Until the Red Cross insisted that it must run the 2-Minor camp, home to about 500 orphans and children who have lost contact with their parents, without the interference of the army's civilian wing, the camp children were on the verge of starvation, although the UN and the Red Cross were providing "saturation" rations.

"Rik insisted that the minors' camp be set up opposite his garrison, obvious so that he could help himself to their food stocks," said an aid worker who refused to be named. Two aid workers who criticised the commander

were expelled last year.

So much of the food sent to southern Sudan is being stolen that aid officials are saying that Operation Lifeline Sudan and other projects should be ended. There are about a million refugees, returnees and displaced people there, who will need 70,000 tons of food this year because of the ten-year war between the Christian and animist south and the Islamic fundamentalist government in Khartoum.

"Food is just fuelling the war and if we stopped sending it perhaps everyone would go back to farming," one long-serving aid worker said. Commander Rik's men may have the most voracious appetite for stolen food supplies, but field workers said that Dr Garang's "Torit faction" is little better.

Some workers who visited the site of the first battle between the two factions in Bor, on the banks of the Nile, said that they found documentary proof that the Torit faction of the SRRA was supplying soldiers with goods intended for civilians. "We found a radio message asking the SRRA for 20 per cent of their medical supplies [from the UN, Red Cross and other agencies] to supply 6,000 new recruits," one official said.

Others reported that large amounts of food and other supplies have been pilfered near Dr Garang's Torit headquarters, close to Juba, the government-held regional capital. Although the liberation army's theft of food frustrates many officials, especially the monitors who conduct spot-checks, others insist that supplies do reach those in real need.

"We should not exaggerate the level of theft, the SRRA and SPLA treat it as a sort of local taxation," one UN official said.

"The truth is that some goes missing, we are feeding many families whose members are soldiers and it is not possible to say that Dad can't eat at home. Also the real point is that this is a war situation and although we do our best to stop leakage, some does get through."

It was clear in Nasir that although the civilian wing of the army was having to syphon some goods to the soldiers, many of its senior figures have fought hard to prevent the military taking more.



Garang: faction split with Commander Rik

Arabs poke fun at their failings

An Egyptian theatre is playing to packed houses with a biting lampoon of Arab political life, Christopher Walker writes from Cairo

A biting lampoon of Arab political attitudes and habits is racking a Cairo theatre nightly, winning awards and breaking new ground in a part of the world where censorship has ruled out anything approaching Western satire.

Lenin el-Ramly's *In Plain Arabic* portrays Arabs as a dictatorial, hypocritical and backward people who cannot compete with the West because they waste their time chanting slogans and failing to deal with modern realities.

The decision to allow it is a reflection of the change in attitudes in Egypt and certain other Arab nations since the Gulf war and comes after President Mubarak permitted live broadcasting of the American Cable News Network for the first time.

The young cast, all amateurs chosen from 2,000 applicants, mimic many Arab leaders, including King Hussein of Jordan and Colonel Gaddafi of Libya. A Western critique of Arab society draws applause from the audience packing the New Opera Theatre.

"You Arabs are dictators, ignorant, stupid," argues the actor portraying an Egyptian journalist. He volunteers to argue the Western point of view in a televised debate held to decide whether a Palestinian

turned into a kidnaper by a temptress representing Israel is a terrorist.

The often hilarious play, which el-Ramly, aged 46, began in 1970 but shelved because of censorship, tells

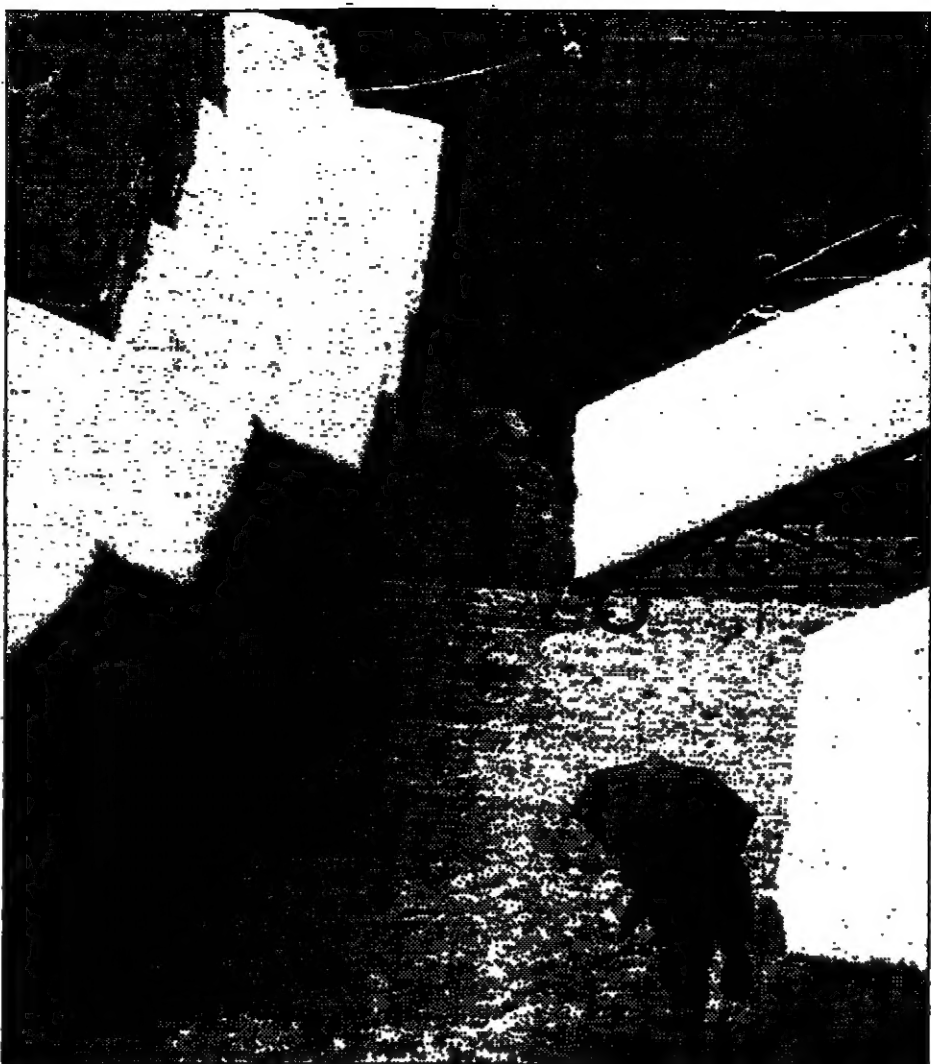
the story of 14 students, each a stereotype of a different Arab country, who pretend to be devout Muslims but sneak off to a fancy dress party in a discotheque.

The character representing Palestine is beaten up by British bullies and staggers on stage dripping blood. Sensitive to what is portrayed as the Western view of Arabs as idle and riddled with double standards, he tells his friends the insult that hurt most. "I wish they only insulted me, but they insulted all of you," he pants breathlessly. "They called me an Arab."

After the kidnap, the students hold a grand conference which symbolises the worthy gatherings of the 21-member Arab League. Everyone shouts at once, all want to be chairman, and nothing is decided but the flowery text of a resolution proclaiming unity.

The play pillories Arab attitudes in a way that amazes and delights its audiences. The Iraqi is a swaggering thug who is always threatening violence, the Syrian is constantly looking over his shoulder for the secret police, and the Gulf Arabs spend more time on the dance floor than on their prayer mats.

The Lebanese is always looking to make money, the Jordanian agrees with everyone, however contradictory their opinions, the Sudanese is hungry and usually drunk, and the Algerian objects to everything on principle.



Snow cover: Jerusalem residents walk towards Damascus Gate in the Old City as a rare winter storm blanketed the city yesterday for the second time this year

Hawke takes to talk shows

Bob Hawke, the former Australian prime minister, is planning to interview past and present world leaders such as President Bush, John Major and Mikhail Gorbachev, the International Management Group, which is handling his new career, says. Australian Labor Party sources say that Mr Hawke, ousted as prime minister in December after eight years, is planning to announce his resignation from politics at the end of this month.

The leader of China's Communist party, Jiang Zemin, feels that the country should speed up economic reforms but remain socialist. "No matter what changes have taken place in the international situation, we must concentrate our energy on doing our work at home well," he said. A nationwide austerity programme, which began three years ago, has slowed down restructuring.

Thomas Pickering, aged 60, the American ambassador to the United Nations, will soon be appointed ambassador to India, officials in Washington say, replacing William Clark. They also said that Edward Perkins, a top State

Department aide, will replace Mr Pickering at the UN.

Mother Teresa, below, has arrived in Rome, apparently well on the road to recovery after her bout of bacterial pneumonia last December. The missionary, aged 81, had



to undergo heart surgery at a hospital in California as a result of the infection. She is expected to meet the Pope while in Rome.

Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the German foreign minister, has been awarded Poland's highest honour, setting the seal on new relations between two historic enemies. He was

presented with the Commander of the Polish Order of Merit with a Star by Krzysztof Skubiszewski, the foreign minister. The award, he said, was "an expression of the feeling of many Poles that the new neighbourly relations between Poland and Germany will bring advantages". Friendship and border treaties between the two countries came into effect last month.

Imelda Marcos, the former first lady of the Philippines, has challenged President Aquino to an election battle for the presidency. The president does not intend to stand for a second term in office. Juan Ponce Enrile, an opposition leader, has said that the election, on May 11, could be a last chance for democracy, or the country would "fall into anarchy".

Louis Beauchemin, one of the Catholic Church's longest serving South Pacific priests, has died in Apia, West Samoa, aged 89. Known to Samoans as Patele Tovia, he made headlines for his controversial "blessings" and condemnation of alcohol in the 1970s.

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Grim blood-letting robs Georgia of riches and romantic charm



Gamsakhurdia: unique son of the soil

TO TRAVEL round Georgia, so long an island of material abundance in a sea of Soviet austerity, is to be haunted by images of collapse.

The Ruritanian romance of central Tbilisi is now smouldering rubble; a blackened shell is all that remains of one of the world's most romantic cities, whose neo-classical decor and wood-panelled apartments enticed travellers on cool summer evenings.

On the northwest coast, once synonymous with palm trees, wine and August frolics, there is a terrifying absence of any legitimate authority, symbolised by stray cattle rubbing in the gardens of government buildings. Poti, a Black Sea port that thrived on fish, dollars, casinos and orange groves, is now

Georgians had the best of everything in the former Soviet Union. But now Stalin's homeland is as sinister a place as anything dreamt by Hitchcock, Bruce Clark writes

as sinister a place as anything Hitchcock invented. As darkness descends on a city without electricity or heating, the sound of random gunfire, muffled by falling sleet, seems the only indicator of life.

In the mountain town of Tskhinvali, where the fierce Ossete race is fighting to secede from Georgia, visitors are given ghastly tours of sandbagged firing positions, a dark, chilly hospital, and the school playground where 60 victims of the fighting, the youngest two years old, lie

buried in crude, snow-covered graves. Only two years ago the lush pastures and orchards around Tskhinvali were a kind of Caucasian Shangri-La: a town of 40,000 people boasted a magnificent theatre where troupes of Georgians and Ossetes took turns to perform.

Is the blood-letting in Stalin's home republic really a harbinger of things to come in Russia, or merely a reminder of how different Georgia always was from the rest of the Soviet empire?

Several key ingredients in Georgia's explosive mix are common to most of the Caucasus but missing from Russia proper.

In contrast to the rootless loneliness of life in most of Russia's decaying cities, Soviet power in Georgia has left intact an intricate social fabric of families, clans and communities to which individuals are fiercely loyal. Through a trading network stretching from Vladivostok to St Petersburg, the Georgians, more than any other Caucasian race, have accumulated private wealth on a scale quite unimaginable for most Russians.

That wealth fuels the black market in arms-producing towns such as Tula, where Kalashnikovs sell for little

over £100. Thus a Georgian is more likely than a Russian to be gripped by a desire to avenge the death of a brother or fellow-villager, and also more likely to possess the necessary weapon.

Another respect in which Georgia stands out is that there is nobody in the former Soviet world quite like Zviad Gamsakhurdia, the fugitive leader who, according to Georgia's new regime this week, is seriously ill.

From Latvia to Turkmenia, communication between the old republican leaders is helped by the fact that all are products of the same school as Russia's President Yeltsin — the former Soviet Communist party. Mr Gamsakhurdia was an outsider with a unique capacity to alienate

almost everyone he dealt with, including Mr Yeltsin and the Soviet army.

Georgia will always be a place apart. Yet, precisely because of its key role in the informal Soviet economy, its turmoil will undoubtedly be felt in Russia. Moscow's police files already tell of increasingly frequent shootouts between people described as "Caucasian males".

In the chilly desolation of Poti harbour, a man, aged 22, mused wistfully on the days when travel between his native Georgia and Russia was unimpeded. A couple of years ago, this likely village lad was making a fortune as an ice-cream salesman in a grimy Siberian city and coping, by his own account, with a queue of statuesque Russian

women. "Russian men over 30 cannot do it. They drink too much and they get no vitamins," he whispered conspiratorially, expressing a well-known Georgian prejudice. In Krasnyarsk, at least, Georgia's isolation from Russia will apparently be sorely regretted.

● Karabakh hull: Armenian leaders in the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh yesterday repudiated a "sinister calm", but said they were braced for another big attack by Azerbaijan forces. Artur Mkrtchyan, president of the regional parliament, said the Azerbaijanis were massing troops and armoured vehicles near Agdal, and a fresh assault on the Armenian stronghold of Askeran was expected any moment.

Gorbachev blamed for KGB watch on poets and priests

BY BRUCE CLARK

ROCK singers, chess players, churchmen and top politicians of left and right were among the prominent Soviet citizens who came under intense surveillance by the Soviet KGB in the year leading up to the August putsch, the Russian parliament was told yesterday.

At an open hearing on the security forces' role in the abortive coup, the KGB was also accused of providing Mikhail Gorbachev with a stream of slanted information designed to encourage him to introduce a state of emergency. Some speakers blamed the former president for condoning, or even encouraging, the mispractices of the defunct spy network.

According to Sergei Stepashin, head of a parliamentary investigation into the coup, the KGB placed telephone taps not only on Boris Yeltsin and his political allies but also on at least two

of the hardliners now in jail for mounting the putsch: Gennadi Yanayev, the vice-president, and Anatoli Lukyanov, the parliamentary chairman. The KGB's preparations for the coup had begun in autumn 1990 or earlier, Mr Stepashin said, adding that the Baltic repression of January last year and the deployment of 50,000 troops during a Moscow street rally last March had been part of the build-up.

While confirming that the KGB's "Alpha" anti-terrorist force had been groomed to storm the Russian parliament and arrest Mr Yeltsin, the deputy departed from the romantic version of events which holds that the squad defied orders to that effect. The final command to move in on the White House was never given, he said.

Boris Pugachev, an investigator employed by the parliamentary panel, said that in the year leading up to the putsch attempt, the KGB had tried to gather compromising information on a bewildering array of prominent figures in cultural and intellectual life. The targets had included Alla Pugacheva — Russia's most popular woman singer — Garry Kasparov, the world chess champion, Mikhail Zhvanetsky, the satirical writer, Silva Kaputikyan, the Armenian poet, and Yuri Afanasyev, the radical historian.

The KGB had also infiltrated political movements ranging from the liberal grouping, Democratic Russia, to the hardline United Workers' Front, according to the investigator, who gripped parliament's attention as he read off his allegations.

Nobody demurred as he declared that "Mikhail Gorbachev must bear full responsibility" for the KGB's political intelligence-gathering, because the former president appeared to have been the willing recipient of the resulting information, right up to last August.

Father Gleb Yakunin, the former dissident, said the KGB's notorious religious affairs department had deeply infiltrated not only his own Russian Orthodox Church but also the Roman Catholic, Buddhist and Muslim clergy of the former Soviet Union. Among the churchmen most frequently mentioned in KGB files as a target for surveillance had been Father Aleksandr Men, a respected Orthodox Christian philosopher of Jewish origin who was murdered mysteriously in September 1990.

Father Yakunin said the KGB used to offer detailed instructions to the Russian Orthodox hierarchy for the promotion abroad of Soviet positions on nuclear disarmament. The intelligence agency had also kept a close watch on the celebrations in 1989 of the millennium of Russia's conversion to Christianity.

Part of the KGB's role has been taken over by a newly created Russian security ministry which will have 137,000 employees. Its stated responsibilities include protecting human rights as well as the security of society and the state. It is also supposed to engage in civilian and military counter-intelligence and to combat smuggling, corruption, terrorism and drug trafficking.

Pointedly excluded from the new agency's make-up is anything like the notorious Fifth Department of the KGB, which monitored dissidents and religion.

● Moscow: Russia will begin withdrawing troops from Lithuania this month and Latvia next month, but the government crisis in Tallinn will delay their departure from Estonia, a top Russian official said yesterday.

Sergei Shakhrai, head of the Russian delegation negotiating the withdrawal, added that all troops of the former Soviet Union in the Baltic states are under the jurisdiction and protection of the Russian government. (AP)



Family tradition: Alessandra, proud of her grandfather, joins the neo-fascists

Marching in Mussolini's steps

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

A GRANDDAUGHTER of Mussolini announced yesterday that she will stand as a neo-fascist candidate in Italy's parliamentary elections to be held on April 5.

Alessandra Mussolini, aged 28, told the Milan newspaper, *Corriere della Sera*, that she would stand for the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement in a Naples constituency. Signora Mussolini is the daughter of

Romano Mussolini, the accomplished jazz pianist, and is also the niece of the film star, Sophia Loren.

The newspaper quoted her as saying that she was standing for the neo-fascists because "it is the party that is closest to the ideas of my grandfather". She said: "I feel very close to him. It is a family tie of which I have always been very proud."

She added: "If I am elected, I will follow the example of my grandfather." She also said that until recently

the word "fascist" was considered shameful. "Fortunately that period has passed. In fact, there is now a reassessment of how much grandpa Benito did for Italy."

Signora Mussolini had earlier tried her hand at acting, but despite the help of her aunt it proved unsuccessful. The granddaughter of Mussolini, dictator of Italy from 1922 to 1943, is currently a medical student and her campaign will focus on health issues.

Habash affair trips up Cresson

FROM PHILIP JACOBSON IN PARIS

WITH the strains of the George Habash affair now threatening what remains of the French Socialist party's unity and morale, Edith Cresson, the prime minister, yesterday called off a planned visit to the Winter Olympics centre in Savoy at the last moment, after holding talks with President Mitterrand.

After 40 minutes of talks in the Elysée palace, Mme Cresson refused to make a statement to journalists, while her staff said that had flying conditions were responsible for the cancellation. However, the simultaneous announcement that M Mitterrand would make a television address in the early evening revived speculation that her days might be numbered. Although most observers here doubt that M Mitterrand would risk a government reshuffle before next month's regional elections, the opposition and media are still out for cabinet blood.

There was more savage criticism yesterday of Roland Dumas, the foreign minister, and Philippe Marchand, the interior minister, both of whom have ruled out resigning over the mishandling of the Palestinian guerrilla leader's stay in a Parisian hospital. M Dumas also attacked Michel Rocard, the former prime minister and the man widely considered to be the most likely Socialist successor to M Mitterrand, for his barbed comments about the Habash affair.

M Dumas, who is normally the most equable of men, took exception to M Rocard's claim that "there is a high-level political responsibility behind this mistake". Seizing on the former prime minister's passion for yachting, M Dumas denounced him as a mere "fair-weather sailor" who lacked the stature of a true statesman. The foreign minister said M Rocard was misinformed about Dr Habash's visit.

It is no secret that M Dumas answers to the president alone, and his high-handed behaviour since Dr Habash's visit has reinforced critics' view that M Mitterrand and his magic circle act as if they are, in the words of *Libération*, the daily newspaper, "the untouchables". Yet at no time since M Mitterrand was re-elected four years ago has the government been held in such widespread contempt by the general public.

With President Yeltsin of Russia arriving in Paris today for a state visit, the president is anxious to avoid further political embarrassment. However, if the Socialists suffer their expected heavy defeat in the regional elections, Mme Cresson's short and troubled term of office may be over.

Plan for one EC capital floated

Brussels: The European Community should follow America's example and group all its branches in one city to end the struggle between Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg, according to the president of the European Parliament.

Egon Klepsch, who took over the presidency of the 518-seat assembly last month, said yesterday: "The simplest thing would be to create a sort of European Washington DC, which would concentrate all the institutions." He hoped to meet Belgian, French and Luxembourg officials to complete a permanent arrangement.

But Belgium must first form a new government, he said, better able to represent it than the caretaker administration that has been managing day-to-day affairs since an inconclusive election in November.

The European parliament holds its plenary sessions in the French city of Strasbourg, but its committees meet in Brussels and many of its civil servants work in Luxembourg. Paris has been blocking decisions on new EC agencies pending a firm commitment from its 11 Community partners that Strasbourg will be confirmed as the site for plenary parliament sessions. (Reuters)

Hope given up

Gormez, Turkey: Rescue teams digging in frozen snow for survivors of avalanches that buried villages in southeast Turkey and killed more than 170 people have given up hope of finding any more survivors. (Reuters)

Finns join in

Helsinki: Finland is ready to apply for full membership of the European Community before the middle of next month, and hopes to be able to start membership negotiations at the same time as Sweden and Austria, which have already applied.

Carrier auction

London: China and India are interested in buying a former Soviet aircraft carrier, the 67,000-ton Varyag, *Jale's Defence Weekly* says. The Varyag is being fitted out at the Nikolayev South shipyard in Ukraine. (AP)

Rome accused

Athens: The Greek Orthodox Church wants the government to break off diplomatic relations with the Vatican because it says the Roman Catholic Church is moving into Eastern Europe's traditionally Orthodox states. (AP)

Pupils strike

Sofia: Thousands of Bulgarian schoolchildren have boycotted classes in a dispute between nationalists and the large ethnic Turkish minority in Krdzhali, south of here, over reintroduction of teaching in Turkish. (Reuters)

Dog survives

Cahors: Sultan, a ten-year-old beagle which disappeared while hunting foxes, has been found alive after 76 days down a 50ft hole. A regional French newspaper said the dog might have survived by eating rats. (AP)

Divine help

Oslo: An armed man who tried to hold up an Oslo bank was stopped by Hans Ertterud, a television evangelist, who shouted for Jesus's help. When the robber turned, a customer hit him on the head with an ashtray. (AP)

Armenia pilots brave blockade

FROM ROBERT SEELY IN YEREVAN

A WOMAN and her crippled child, dragged up by helicopter gangplank by his arm, were the last to secure their passage to Nagorno-Karabakh. After them came cargo, ammunition crates and the body of a boy, aged 14, whose coffin had been draped in the red cloth beloved by Soviet propagandists.

The few Soviet-made Mi8 helicopters which fly from Yerevan are, since Azerbaijan's blockade imposed in 1989, the only way in and out of Nagorno-Karabakh for Armenians. The pilots, all Armenian, maintain an aerial lifeline for supplies ranging from medicines to school-books and arms. They also bring contact with the outside world.

For my three companions and I, the flight to Nagorno-Karabakh took five hours to organise through friends in Yerevan. We did not ask for guarantees for our safety or even when we would be able to fly out again. Humans and helicopters are both targets in this Caucasian war.

The flight, over Armenia's Lake Sevan and the barren scrubland of western Azerbaijan, lasted barely an hour. As we entered the air space over Nagorno-Karabakh, the undulating and desolate land changed to heavily forested hills. Zori Aramyan, aged 35, the guard beside me, peered out of the helicopter, resting the barrel of his 1953 hunting rifle on the metal rim of the porthole. Over his shoulder he carried a machinegun. "I go where the fighting is," he said.

We landed in an open field between two wooded knolls overlooking a ridge above Aterk, a small town in northern Nagorno-Karabakh. Three pick-up trucks, packed with people, appeared from behind the knolls and encircled the helicopter.

Fifty people had soon surrounded the craft to collect supplies, convey news or just to hear it. As the helicopter ascended, someone ran to the boy's coffin, left within 50ft of the craft, and sat on it, grasping the rim tightly to stop the lid blowing off. We had arrived, alive.

Flood of refugees washes over Germany

FROM IAN MURRAY IN BONN

ANOTHER 31,000 refugees seeking asylum arrived in Germany last month and there is every indication that increasing numbers will flood into the country as the government struggles to find a way of stopping them.

The January figure is 30 per cent up on December's. If the trend continues unbroken, the authorities fear that as many as another 400,000 refugees could try to

settle in the country by the end of the year.

The refugees are in addition to the ethnic Germans, mostly from the former Soviet Union and Poland, who have automatic right to German citizenship and are also arriving at up to 20,000 a month. According to Horst Waffenschmidt, the interior ministry state secretary in charge of help for ethnic Germans, 650,000 of them are considering emigrating if conditions in the East deteriorate further. The official added

that 150,000 had been granted precautionary visas.

West Germany has in the past six years had to absorb almost three million emigrants, and nearly 2,000 more arrive every day. The pressure on housing is acute, with local authorities having to take over entire hotels, schools, and church halls to provide accommodation. Munich has resorted to using container parks on the Oktoberfest grounds.

The coalition government remains bitterly divided on

how to deal with the problem. The opposition Social Democrats are in their turn delaying an all-party compromise that was meant to speed vetting of the asylum claims.

The coalition dispute is between the Christian Democrats, who want to restrict asylum to residents of non-democratic countries where political persecution is commonplace, and the Free Democrats, who insist that Germany must remain a land of asylum for all, a view shared by the Social Democrats.

Without the support of both groups, the Christian Democrats cannot obtain the two-thirds majority needed for a constitutional change.

On February 20 the Christian Democrats are to ask the Bundestag to agree proposals aimed at cutting vetting procedures for all refugees to six weeks. At present only about 5 per cent are eventually granted asylum status, but many of the rest manage to stay almost indefinitely because it takes so long to review individual cases.

Saint Laurent celebrates 30 years of fashion-setting

FROM LIZ SMITH, FASHION EDITOR, IN PARIS



Designer guest: Rudolf Nureyev, left, with Yves Saint Laurent at the Opéra Bastille celebration

YVES Saint Laurent celebrated the 30th anniversary of his fashion house at the Opéra Bastille in Paris with a soirée that perfectly encapsulated his twin passions: theatre and fashion.

Katia Ricciarelli sang Puccini, and then wave upon wave of models rose from the distant horizon of the opera house on Monday night to sink down the stage in a living retrospective of the couturier's most celebrated designs for evening: columns of draped satin and bronze lame, black tuxedo suits, Picasso-inspired embroidered evening jackets and capes winged on the shoulders with Braque-style doves. A film

was shown that had been taken backstage at Saint Laurent's first show in 1962. Interviews with the designer, then aged 20, were also screened. He was seen mocking as *trap bourgeois* the leather skirts and the neat tailoring that he would go on to create in later years.

The actress Catherine Deneuve, a co-hostess of the celebrations, shimmered on stage at the end in a Saint Laurent sea-green and blue sequinned evening suit to hold his hand as he accepted the audience's standing ovation. Looking remarkably fit and steady for a man who is known to suffer from recurring bouts of "overwhelming

nervous exhaustion", the designer said that he was a fashion house built on love. "I want to go on creating clothes that express a *joie de vivre* and love of women," he added.

Rudolph Nureyev, Zizi Jeanmaire and Mathieu Saint Laurent, the designer's mother, joined the top table at the celebratory supper held in the opera house afterwards. "It was such an emotional performance," Paloma Picasso, daughter of the painter and one of Saint Laurent's former muses, said after the show.

Pierre Bergé, Saint Laurent's business partner since 1962, who has skillfully structured the designer's ideas into the £2.3 billion international fashion empire for which they today provide the mainstay, was appointed head of the Paris Opéra in 1988. The harsh modernity of M Bergé's new theatre complex, his "opera house for the people", in the Place de la Bastille proved to be a suitable backdrop for the creations of Saint Laurent. The designer indeed "dresses the people", having established such staples of the modern wardrobe as trouser suits, brass-buttoned aviator jackets, satin-impaled "tuxedos" for women, safari shirts and clashes of prints and peasant blouses.

Venezuela commander orders surrender by rebel troops to halt further bloodshed

Loyal forces defeat coup attempt to overthrow Pérez

FROM TONY BIANCHI IN CARACAS

PRESIDENT Carlos Andrés Pérez and forces loyal to his government regained control of Venezuela yesterday after a surprise military uprising which included an attempt to assassinate him.

Army commander Hugo Chávez, head of the paratroop battalion that launched the attack on the president in Caracas, surrendered. Admitting that the coup attempt

had failed, Chávez called upon all other rebel forces throughout the country to lay down their arms in order to avoid further bloodshed and destruction.

"Our mission has failed. It is useless at this point to continue fighting... we should wait for better times to carry out the changes we have been fighting for," the officer said.

According to senior mili-

tary officers, the rebel movement began after an announcement by President Pérez in which the government offered concessions to Colombia in the bitter border dispute that Venezuela has with the neighbouring country.

The coup attempt began shortly after midnight when a group of middle-ranking officers moved with armoured vehicles and paratroops on the presidential residence and the presidential palace in Caracas and against government buildings in the cities of Maracay, Valencia and Maracaibo.

Members of the armed forces — by far the greatest number of whom stood by President Pérez — apparently discovered the coup attempt before it began. They protected him and launched a fierce counter-attack.

Within three hours the loyal forces, headed by General Fernando Ochoa, the defence minister, regained control of both the presidential buildings. The situation at the nearby Miranda military air base, however, was still unclear last night.

Sporadic shooting continued near the air base. A small group of rebels who survived the government counter-offensive was holding out in the base's air force headquarters. Military officers communicating on military and police radio bands were overheard discussing whether they should order the building to be bombed.

Meanwhile, conflicting reports from Valencia claimed that the rebel armoured division under the command of an army captain there was refusing to surrender and was in control of a garrison outside the city.

The government has declared a state of martial law in order to maintain control of Caracas, the capital, and the principal cities and other population centres.

The attempt at mounting a military takeover came as a shock to Venezuelans after 30 years of staunchly democratic government.



Look of defeat: coup leader Major Hugo Chavez yesterday after his surrender

Exile who rose to the top

FROM REUTER IN CARACAS

PRESIDENT Pérez of Venezuela has long had a high international profile in seeking to resolve Central American and Caribbean disputes and in championing Third World causes.

Stunned by Venezuela's oil wealth and the country's record as one of the most stable democracies in Latin America, he has also been active in the affairs of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Most recently, he has played a role in trying to resolve the political impasse in Haiti.

Senor Pérez was an exile and political prisoner under the military-led governments that ruled Venezuela before

democracy was established in 1958 when a popular uprising overthrew the dictator, Marcos Pérez Jiménez.

He rose to national prominence as a hardline interior minister in the early 1960s. In his first term as president, from 1974 to 1979, his big-spending policies, helped by a quadrupling of oil revenues, brought prosperity and near-full employment to the country. His main achievement was the nationalisation of the oil industry in January 1976.

In Senor Pérez's second presidential term, oil prices had slumped and the country staggered under a \$33.2 billion (£18.5 billion) foreign debt. Less than a month after

he took office in February 1989, economic reforms were introduced, including sharp increases in petrol and public transport prices. Nearly 300 people were killed in rioting sparked by the increases, according to official figures.

His first year in office was marked by highest inflation recorded in Venezuela — about 80 per cent — and a severe recession, with the gross domestic product shrinking by 8.3 per cent. But his economic reforms yielded fruit, cutting inflation, and the economy was spurred to boom levels. The gross domestic product grew by 9.2 per cent last year and by 4.4 per cent in 1990.

Fire at colony camp kills 21

FROM JONATHAN BRAUDE IN HONG KONG

AT LEAST 21 people were burnt to death and more than 120 were injured when Vietnamese boat people in a Hong Kong detention camp ran riot, pushing burning blankets through the roof and windows of a hut where men, women and children had fled for shelter.

Among the dead were at least five children aged under 16. Seven more boat people were last night still in critical condition in hospital after the incident on Monday night. There was more fighting early last night, but police said there were no casualties.

The worst camp violence since the colony began playing reluctant host to the tens of thousands of boat people began early on Monday evening when hundreds of inmates from two sections of the crowded Shek Kong detention centre clashed in what appeared to be a dispute over hot water. A police investigation into the violence, which last night led to the arrest of at least four Vietnamese, was also looking at claims that guards may have locked the hut doors from the outside to keep inmates away from the fighting.

Officials were also making preparations last night to move 2,500 north Vietnamese out of Shek Kong to separate them from the south Vietnamese who were blamed for the brutal attack. Ironically, all the dead and many of the rioters had volunteered to return to Vietnam peacefully, hailing the authorities into the belief that communal violence would not break out in their section. Unlike the rest of the territory's 54,465 detainees, north and south Vietnamese were not segregated.

Officials said the first indication of trouble occurred early in the evening. A fight had broken out in a queue for hot water in Section C of the camp. The police had moved in and the incident seemed to have blown over, they said.

Closer to midnight, however, fighting broke out between south and north Vietnamese with such ferocity that police guards were driven out. They resorted to firing tear-gas over the fence as they waited for reinforcements. By the time the 200-strong riot force was ready, the hut was on fire.

Amnesty claims rape is 'routine'

London: Women are routinely raped and abused by police, soldiers and prison guards in dozens of countries, according to Amnesty International (Michael Binyon writes). The victims have even included pregnant women and girls aged only 14.

Yet many governments refuse to recognise rape as a serious human rights violation, and rapists often have been government agents, Amnesty reports. Thorough investigations are seldom held and the few perpetrators prosecuted often get away with a light reprimand.

Amnesty says rape and sexual abuse are commonly used to extract confessions in Turkey. Dozens of Palestinian women and girls detained in the Israeli-occupied territories have also reportedly been sexually abused.

In Uganda soldiers have raped women and girls while searching villages for rebels. In the Philippines, too, many rapes during military operations have been documented.

Some women run the risk of being raped or abused because they are targets for government oppression. A Guatemalan trade unionist said she was kept naked throughout her interrogation and threatened with gang rape if she did not reveal information. Twelve women in Greece, arrested after putting up political posters, were kept naked in an open room full of policemen.

One of the worst cases was in India in 1990, when soldiers at a Kashmir roadblock fired on a bus carrying a wedding party before dragging the bride, aged 18, and her pregnant aunt into a field. Six soldiers then raped them.

Iraq silent

New York: Iraq will not attend resumed UN talks in Vienna on the possible resumption of Iraqi oil sales, because they were no longer useful, Abdul Amir al-Anbani, the ambassador to the UN said. (Reuters)

Sheriff killed

Sava, Fiji: A court sheriff was stoned to death as he tried to evict six striking miners from houses belonging to the former Gold Mines Company north of here. Five people have been arrested. (AFP)

Bandit raid

Hyderabad: Bandits firing rockets attacked a train in southern Pakistan, killed a policeman, robbed passengers and kidnapped 18 people. The train was on its way through rural Sind to Karachi. (Reuters)

Case dropped

Maputo: Prosecutors have dropped the case against Colonel Manuel Antonio, the Mozambique interior minister accused of participating in a plot to overthrow the government, the AIM news agency said. (AP)

Hostage bishop

Kampala: Uganda's Roman Catholic archbishop, Emmanuel Wadima, was held hostage for 24 hours by a gun-wielding Aids victim who blew himself up with a hand grenade. (Reuters)

Storm deaths

Cairo: Fourteen people, including three sisters, were killed and dozens injured in a sand storm that swept across Egypt. The sisters, aged between six and 13, died when a wall collapsed in a Cairo suburb. (AFP)

Leprosy attack

Geneva: The World Health Organisation is to test a cocktail of ofloxacin, and rifampicin, two powerful antibiotics, that could help to wipe out leprosy, which still afflicts between five and six million people. (Reuters)

Iraqis held

Kuwait City: Kuwait security forces have recently arrested "two groups of Iraqis, one of which aimed at committing acts of sabotage while the other was made up of smugglers", according to the interior ministry. (AFP)

Muslims riot

Algiers: Security forces clashed with crowds protesting at the trials of Muslim fundamentalists in the eastern cities of Constantine and Bama. The headquarters of an Islamic trade union were closed in the capital. (AP)

Bush condemns Caracas mutiny

FROM REUTER IN WASHINGTON

THE United States, Western Europe and Latin America yesterday condemned the attempted military coup in Venezuela, an oil-rich country regarded as one of the most stable in South America.

President Bush said he telephoned President Carlos Andrés Pérez, who narrowly escaped death, and that the Venezuelan president had indicated "things were under control". He also spoke to President Gaviria of neighbouring Colombia.

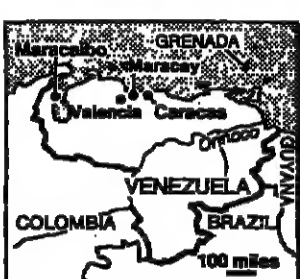
"I assured them, both of them, that the United States supports democracy in Venezuela and elsewhere in this hemisphere and that this military coup attempt against President Carlos Andrés Pérez is firmly condemned by the United States," he said.

Mr Bush did not respond directly when asked whether he planned to take any action to help Señor Pérez. "They seem to think it's under control. I hope that's the case."

In Washington, the Organisation of American States said that, at the request of Colombia and Venezuela, it was holding an urgent meeting the afternoon of the permanent council of the 34-member regional group to discuss the situation in Venezuela. Sixteen Latin American presidents issued a joint state-

ment condemning the attempted military coup and called for a return to constitutional order in the country, which has had uninterrupted democratic rule since 1958.

The Latin American response was co-ordinated since early morning by Señor Gaviria, who said he was in telephone contact with Señor Pérez, a statement by the Co-



lombian presidential press office said. The communiqué was agreed by the leaders of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Panama, Peru and Uruguay.

In a telegram to Señor Pérez's foreign ministry, the European Commission expressed "its firmest condemnation of these attempts to undermine the democratic order".

Japan gaffes rile US

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON AND JOANNA FITTMAN IN TOKYO

A FEW unguarded words from Kiichi Miyazawa, the Japanese prime minister, on Monday has whipped anti-Japanese hysteria in America to dangerous new levels.

Mr Miyazawa's assertion that Americans had lost the work ethic and the drive "to live by the sweat of their brow" touched the rawest of nerves in the economically distressed country. His comments were strongly criticised by the White House. Congressional leaders and state governors of both political parties, and made front-page news yesterday in every important newspaper in the country.

Mr Miyazawa and the Japanese foreign ministry raced to defuse a new trans-Pacific dispute with apologies and explanations, but the damage was done. In any case, within a few hours of the prime minister's apology another Liberal Democrat politician made sure he threw more fat on the fire.

Shintaro Ishihara, one of Japan's most fervent nationalist MPs, told an audience of supporters in the western city of Nara that "American workers are totally useless. But America's politicians and businessmen are even worse... the presidents and directors of American companies pay themselves bonuses even when their companies are in the red and cut tens of thousands of people from the workforce." That, he said, was ridiculous.

Mr Ishihara chose to illustrate his point by explaining that the Japan Airlines crash in August 1985, in which 520 passengers were killed, had been the result of shoddy and irresponsible workmanship by American workers at Boeing, which had repaired the JAL aircraft just before the disaster.

Time capsule sealed to mark 'Death Railway'

FROM DAVID BRUNNSTROM IN HELLFIRE PASS, THAILAND

ALLIED veterans of the Far East campaign forced to slave on Japan's "Death Railway" returned to the Thai jungle yesterday to seal mementoes into a time capsule to be opened 100 years after the war.

"I spent my 20th, 21st, 22nd and 23rd birthdays on this railway," Rocky Horne, aged 70, of Melbourne, said. "I don't want my grandchildren to go through the same."

More than a dozen former members of the armed forces headed by Colonel Sir Edward "Weary" Dunlop, of Australia, gathered with the ambassadors of Britain, Australia, New Zealand, The Netherlands and America at Hellfire Pass.

The pass was one of the most notorious stretches of the rail link through Thailand and Burma that the Japanese army ordered to be built as a route to British India. A quarter of a million Asian labourers and Allied prisoners of war worked on the 260-mile railway.

About 13,000 Allied prisoners of war and 80,000 labourers, most of them Thai, Burmese and Malays, died of starvation, disease or brutality carving a way through almost impenetrable jungle and solid rock outcrops. "This stretch here killed a lot of good men," Colonel Dunlop, aged 85, said pointing down the narrow Konyu Cutting, carved through rock now overhung with enormous bamboo shoots and jungle creepers.

He said that teams of emaciated men suffering dysentery and malaria worked barefoot and in rags laying sleepers and rails through the pass. Some of the line survives today. They worked around the clock to the light of flaming torches: it was this that gave the stretch of railway the name Hellfire Pass.

Grey-haired, stooped old soldiers wearing medals on their civilian clothes stood



Memory line: A former Australian POW returns to 'Death Railway' in Hellfire Pass, Thailand

again to attention while the "Last Post" was played to a background chorus of tropical insects. Colonel Dunlop and Bill Toon, of the Australian Returned Servicemen's League, placed a 105mm artillery shell case containing wartime writings and later tributes in a concrete plinth overlooking the pass.

Letters from the prime ministers of Britain, The Netherlands, New Zealand and Australia and from President Bush were included. Mr Bush's letter said he hoped the recent changes in the world's political scene prom-

... A surprise move that brought prosecution cries of dirty tricks. Mike Tyson's defence lawyers yesterday attempted to introduce three witnesses who claim to have seen the boxer's accuser locked in sexual play with him shortly before the moment she claims he raped her.

However, Judge Patricia Gifford, acting on the furious protests of Greg Garrison, the prosecutor, refused to allow evidence from the three women, who were said to have come forward only last Thursday when the trial was well under way. "I wonder what rock these people have been hiding under that they never heard what was going on," Mr Garrison said, dismissing their sudden appearance as "inherently untrustworthy".

The judge expressed scepticism about the credibility of the women and the defence team's tactics. She rebuked Vincent Fuller, the distinguished Washington counsel acting for the boxer, for failing to inform the prosecution when the women came forward in the middle of the prosecution testimony last week. "The court doesn't appreciate being put in this position in the middle of a trial," she said.

According to Mr Fuller, the women would have contradicted evidence from Desiree Washington, the young beauty contestant who claims she was raped, that she had not engaged in sexual play with Tyson in the back of his limousine before accompanying him to his hotel room. The women, who are all connected with the Black Expo event that brought Tyson to Indianapolis last July, would testify that "these two people in the back seat were all over each other", the defence lawyer said.

In the first real clash between the stately Mr Fuller and the fiery Mr Garrison, the defence team implored the court to believe that they had had no intention of concealing key witnesses, in contravention of American rules of pre-trial "discovery". Mr Fuller protested about his honour being impugned and offered to swear on the Bible that his team had not set out to ambush the prosecution.

Legal experts said the judge came close to declaring a mistrial, a step which would have required the whole multi-million dollar media circus to pack up from the court and come back to start again in several months' time. The experts said that her decision to bar the testimony will be grounds for the appeal which the defence will automatically file should Tyson be acquitted.

Tyson rape trial

Judge bars women defence witnesses

The judge in the Tyson trial was not amused when the defence team tried to call three surprise witnesses, Charles Bremner reports from Indianapolis

one of the outbursts of temper for which he is known. His goal will be to efface the sympathetic image of the helpless man-child which has so far been drawn in the court.

As the prosecution neared the end of its evidence, Ms Washington's mother gave a tearful account of her daughter's "torment" since her encounter with Tyson. "She sees his face the whole time... She is not the same daughter that went to Indianapolis. She has not been the same since the day we returned," Mary Bell Washington said, displaying all the emotion that her daughter held back in her own highly composed court appearance last week. Mrs Washington and her husband drove to Indianapolis from their home in Rhode Island to bring their daughter home after her alleged rape. Mrs Washington said that her daughter kept saying: "Mom, I'm not the same Desiree any more."

While Mrs Washington's account of her daughter corresponded precisely with the image of the innocent Sunday-school teacher who stood in the witness box last week, another version has begun to emerge in recent days. According to other contestants who were with her during the Miss Black America pageant, Ms Washington was the most flirtatious of their group when the boxer paid a visit to them during a rehearsal. She was the only one, for example, who volunteered her telephone number to Tyson. The defence is basing its case on the argument that Ms Washington deliberately led the boxer on, fully aware of the likely outcome of her visit to his bedroom at 2am.

Standing by his prejudices

Pat Buchanan is fighting furiously in New Hampshire, says Peter Stothard

Imagine that my colleague Bernard Levin had been offered a place in the cabinet and needed to stand for parliament to seize his prize. Whatever his qualifications, he would have one or two handicaps: perhaps one or two million would be more accurate in the columns with which he has stimulated *Times* readers over the years. Barely a single reader has never been appalled by something Bernard has written. By the time that his opponents had scanned his oeuvre, plucking phrases from their context, his chances of achieving the programmatic blandness required in politics today would be slim.

So when the American columnist and broadcaster Patrick Buchanan announced last year that he would be challenging George Bush for the Republican presidential nomination in New Hampshire, White House aides merely smiled. They salivated at the thought of the outrageous remarks that they would find in the electronic libraries which these days sit at the end of every campaigner's computer.

Some remembered the time Mr Buchanan attacked feminist lobbyists with the words "we ought to send those chicks back to the kitchen where they belong". Others recalled his opposition to Operation Desert Storm ("the war for which the neo-conservatives paint has quagmire written all over it"), his criticism of congress as "Israeli occupied territory" and his attacks on "the Israeli Defence Ministry and its amen corner in the United States".

Other black marks included a statement that Nazi diesel engines could not have caused mass killings at Treblinka, his opposition to the pursuit of war criminals and his attacks on homosexuals ("Aids is nature's retribution") and blacks ("the White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan can't hold a candle to the thuggish criminal elements of the black community in Washington DC").

Surely, thought the president's men, the man who once described the prestigious *Washington Post* as "the attack dog of the American left" would get scant sympathy from the journalists who have so much power over him as perceived to do well in New Hampshire. He would be buried.

Mr Buchanan was certainly vulnerable. As a former speechwriter for presidents Nixon and Reagan he has never apologised for Watergate or the Iran-Contra affair. He has never sought shelter in woolly equivocation. No one who wants to earn \$400,000 (£720,000) a year in the word-peddling world of Washington can afford to. Political campaigners live by provoking and exploiting "gaffes". Here was a man whose gaffes were all on record. They had only to be highlighted. Patrick Buchanan was the Bill Clinton of the word-

processor, whose past heights of rhetoric would prove as devastating as the high heels about to tread on the governor from Arkansas.

Events have not turned out like that. This week the Bush blitz begins in New Hampshire. Custom dictates that presidents do not advertise on television in the nation's first primary election. But custom has been hurried aside by the men of the "Bush-Quayle 92" campaign, as they have swung from nonchalance (Buchanan heading for 20 per cent of the February 18 vote) to nervousness (30 per cent) to panic (a possible 40 per cent, bringing to mind the New Hampshire upsets for Harry Truman in 1952 and Lyndon Johnson in 1968).

Today the past is every candidate's enemy. When the phone rings Governor Clinton never knows whether it is a well-wisher with wallet and sympathy, offering a \$10,000 contribution, or an ill-wisher with letters and tapes, recalling midnight trysts. But he is holding on, helped by a determined effort by the main newspapers to avoid another "feeding frenzy" around a candidate's corpse.

The spirit of Gary Hart is crucial to the help for Bill Clinton: if one is to sin, it is said, at least be the second to be caught sinning. George Bush is suffering because he is considered the first to be caught out in a spectacular full-dress lie before the people of New Hampshire.

Buchanan's advertisements focus on the president's 1988 broken promise not to raise taxes. Two have been broadcast so far, and they are devastatingly clear. "Now Mr Bush is promising to fix the recession. Can we afford four more years of broken promises?" asks the narrator.

Mr Buchanan is doing well despite the outrageousness of some of his past remarks, because he has refused to retract a single one of them. Yesterday it was announced that he has been more successful at fundraising than any of the other candidates competing in the New Hampshire primary. His "America First" rhetoric — which the White House plans to portray as "pinhead isolationism" — is finding eager listeners. Charges of anti-Semitism have not taken hold. He has turned down many opportunities to withdraw his comments about Treblinka.

The friendly questioning of him by fellow journalists is one of the big surprises of the campaign so far. Instead of rifling through the files for dirt, they have treated Mr Buchanan as one of their own. "America is bitter because the front pages of the prestige press and the major network news shows are saturated with liberal bigotry," he once wrote. But yesterday's liberal bigots are also the people who today are bored, dissatisfied and generally disinclined to do anything to help George Bush.



Pat Buchanan: winning points for consistency

The passing of the all-women colleges endangers an admirable species, laments Philip Howard

Blue-stocking blues

son's *The Princess*. Until the 1960s, a woman who entertained a man in her room had to push her bed into the corridor first for the sake of appearances. It is hard today to understand what a giant step forward the foundation of a women's college like Somerville was. Every century a few exceptional women, from Margaret Beaufort and Mary Wollstonecraft to Jane Austen and George Eliot, broke the barrier and showed that women were quite as capable of being educated as men. But the monstrous idea came late to Oxford, long after the United States, and ten years after Cambridge.

Lady Margaret Hall, a women's college governed according to church principles, was opened in 1878. A year later came Somerville, named after Mary Somerville, the mathematician and scientific writer. It was undermanned, open to women irrespective of religion or race and it has been a powerhouse of clever women ever since. Until recently it

always came top or near the top of the Norrington table of college finals results. Its *alumnae* are famous around the world: Shirley Williams, Indira Gandhi, Vera Brittain, Dorothy Sayers, Esther Rantzen, Rose Macaulay, Kiri Te Kanawa, Dorothy Hodgkin, and, of course, Margaret Thatcher.

In the 25 years since the middle Sixties, a wave of co-education has swept through the old universities. Oxford and Cambridge ceased to be male preserves with a few female strongholds within them, and it took a strong-minded young woman to choose a women's college, however distinguished, once she was offered entry to much older, grander, richer, and more beautiful institutions. The all-women colleges slipped to the bottom of the Norrington table, and its equivalent at Cambridge, the Tompkins.

The single-sex male colleges have all gone co-ed, down to the last ditches of Oriel at Oxford and Magdalene at Cambridge, Girton

has gone, as has LMH. Once Somerville goes, the only all-woman college left at Oxford will be St Hilda's. Still flying the all-female flag at Cambridge are Newnham and New Hall, and the splendid new Lucy Cavendish for mature women who missed higher education. I suppose it is only logical and fair, but it seems a pity. Pressure for academic results and for beef in the university hierarchy pushes women's colleges to go co-ed.

The proportion of women at Oxford and Cambridge has risen to about two-fifths among undergraduates. It is much lower in the senior common rooms. Most female undergraduates outside the women's colleges are now taught and tutored by men. Many co-ed, formerly male colleges have only a few token female fellows. Many more men than women apply for any post going, because until recently few women had the higher education necessary to qualify for the posts. And in any case,

women still tend to have a second job of bearing children and running a home. Equality will really have arrived at Oxbridge when Christ Church has a Deaconess and Trinity has a Mistress. LMH let the side down by appointing its first male principal. It is not as if there are too many top jobs for women academics.

Something of value is being lost with the passing of our blue-stocking colleges. Co-education is not necessarily more fun for the girls. They can end up, as women always have done, washing the socks and cooking the spag bog and doing the groceries and playing mother to feckless male undergraduates before their time. They rapidly take on the traditional character of their colleges, so that Oriel women tend to be hearty rowers, and Magdalene girls are pretty damn yach.

There is something to be said for the fun, and freedom, and privacy, and sensible feminism of an all-women's college. Floreat Somerville, as it always has proudly. But floreat even more St Hilda's and Newnham and Lucy Cavendish and New Hall. Equality means equal opportunities, not compulsory shared bathrooms for all.

The Mediterranean way of life is impervious to Brussels bureaucracy, writes Martin Ivens

Europe's sea of troubles

Whipping up enthusiasm for a campaign in Italy after his success in Africa, the "soft underbelly" of Europe's Mediterranean, ignored by Brussels, has become the entry point for the exploding populations of the Maghreb, while its ancient traditions thwart the best laid plans of northern bureaucrats. Has the south become the European Community's own soft underbelly?

Northern Europeans have not understood what is happening to the south. Jacques Delors blithely prophesied that his European city on a shining hill would be built on Christian foundations, but the Islamic influx from across the Mediterranean already confounds his prediction. Accustomed to thinking of the Mediterranean as a barrier between Islam and Christendom, northern Europeans have wiped the inner sea off their mental maps. It lives on only in the books of such writers as Lawrence Durrell, in the form of nostalgia for a lost cosmopolitan civilisation which succumbed to the Nazis and then to the post-colonial barbarians.

As any student of historical geography knows, seas and rivers are as much corridors for commerce and the flow of peoples as barriers or frontiers. The Mediterranean is to Europe what the Rio Grande is to the United States. Millions of Muslim immigrants have poured in to France, Italy and Spain, and they intend to stay. With the removal of internal border controls, they will head north. Prosperous northerners find it bothersome to breed, so southerners take their place in the great cities.

Only when the police or the native poor fought running battles with the migrants did the political elite start to take notice. Italy, which once prided itself on its hospitable nature, is now a tinderbox of racial conflict, fuelled by the arrival of a million immigrants in five years. The rise of xenophobic regional "leagues" in the prosperous north may well be more than a grotesque curiosity in Italy's



national elections next April.

In cosmopolitan France, host to more than four million foreign residents, the main Paris mosque now has a *Multichosen* in fundamentalist Algeria. Le Pen's National Front has outgrown its Poujadist, lower-middle-class base, and is now spreading its poison among the urban working class, which lives cheek-by-jowl with immigrants from the Maghreb. Moroccans pour into Spain, a mere eight miles across the straits of Gibraltar, accused by resentful locals of bringing a plague of drugs in their wake.

Until recently, the south was treated by Brussels as a joke. Applications to join the European Community of Europe by Turkey and Morocco were consigned to bureaucratic never-never land. Azeddin Ouessou, the Moroccan minister dealing with Brussels, was forced to ask "How can you make one of the great corridors of commerce in history into a barrier, a fortification?", adding "This is the setting for war".

The Quai d'Orsay hopes that in Algeria the French trained officer corps will keep the fundamentalist masses at bay. The French and Italian governments have adopted a "pay them to stay at home policy", much criticised by the British. At the Luxembourg summit last June, the Foreign Office felt it had been bounced into sending more aid to Algeria to safeguard debts to French banks.

Mass immigration from the south is the open challenge. But does the Mediterranean outlook, shared by its inhabitants on both shores, pose a more subtle threat to the unifiers of Brussels? Robert Fox's new study of the Mediterranean and its people, *The Inner Sea* (Sinclair-Stevenson, £19.95), advances the thesis that it is the flexibility of the southern outlook that could wreck a Europe united by upright northerners. Like laterday William the Con-

querors with a Domesday Book in mind, Brussels officials have proposed to register individually every cow in the EC. The British will go along, grumbling, but like the good Europeans we are at heart, will obey. In the Mediterranean south, where vast areas of life are unaffected by the state, the new Domesday book will be doomed by wholesale fraud.

For centuries the clannish Mediterranean peasant has been evading the tithes of the church, the exactions of monarchs and the rule of absentee landlords. Ties of blood are far more binding than the rule of law. North Italians have long despised of reforming their southern neighbours' corrupt politics. In the Mezzogiorno, where community, faction and friendship outweigh any national laws, they certainly know how to rig an

electoral machine. Can Brussels do any better than Rome?

Britain, of all European countries, will suffer most from this division between north and south. Our trains may stop running when leaves fall on the line, but the Inland Revenue still collects our taxes efficiently, and our laws, even European ones, are obeyed. Hence the government's willingness to go to the wall over the European Social Charter. Rich countries want poorer countries to raise their labour costs by limiting working hours. In the end, Britain is prepared to comply. The Mediterranean countries would applaud such a communitarian approach and preserve their comparative labour advantage by failing to enforce it.

On his travels, Fox was told by an Italian professor that the Mediterranean operates on a system dating back to the ancient world, in which "virtue and honour are based not on moral goodness but on power and blood".

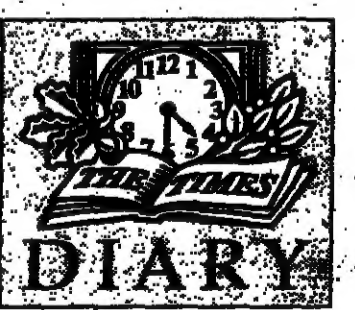
Encore Delors

DOUGLAS HURD files to Brussels tonight for a private dinner with Jacques Delors at which he is expected to tell the EC president that Britain has no objection to an extension of his stay in office.

Delors is due to retire from the post at the end of this year and there will be some surprise in anti-federalist circles that Britain will support the retention of the man whom Mrs Thatcher once accused of introducing "socialism by the back door" and who has become one of the principal beasts of Tory demonology. "We will support the consensus," says a Foreign Office spokesman — which means, if Delors wants it, British backing for a further two years at least.

While Sir Geoffrey Howe was foreign secretary, contact with Delors was kept to a formal minimum, but Hurd has been discreetly conducting a private dialogue for nearly two years. It was he who finally succeeded in getting Delors invited to Downing Street by Mrs Thatcher. "They were both on their best behaviour," says one who was present. "But that's probably because they never discussed EMU." Many had expected Britain would back the rival claim of Ruud Lubbers, who may now have to wait until 1994. Another potential contender is Felipe Gonzalez.

Hurd will fly to Brussels after this morning's unveiling of a logo to mark Britain's six-month presidency of the EC later this year. The FO put the contract out to tender and several design consultancies as well as the Central Office of Information put in bids. Yesterday the FO was keeping secret the winning design and its designer, although it is known that the



COI's own design was rejected.

Hurd will bump into Delors again on Friday on a junket which is extravagant even by EC standards. Because the treaty agreed in Maastricht, in December was not formally signed at the time, all 12 EC foreign ministers are returning to the Dutch town for a brief signing session, to be followed by dinner in the elegant surroundings of the Chateau Neercanne. Have they never heard of faxes?

Political correctness seems to have infiltrated the BBC. This week's issue of BBC Playdays, the corporation's magazine for kids, contains detailed instructions on how to make a headress using only thin card, glue and feathers. "Now you can pretend to be Native Americans," it enthuses. So now we can all play cowchidren and native Americans, presumably.

Monkey business

THERE was just the faintest whiff of fireworks in London's Chinatown yesterday as the year of the monkey dawned. In Gerard Street shops and restaurants there was a buzz of excitement, much to the disappointment of many in the Chinese community. Nicola Lee, a 22-year-old trainee at the Bank of East Asia, was sombrely eating

duck at the New Fook Lam Moon restaurant, celebrating not only the Chinese new year but her birthday (in the year of the rooster) — all alone and in her lunch hour. "It should be a public holiday," said Ms Lee, a Malay Chinese who came to Britain when she was 16.

"All over Asia, everyone is partying. Here you have to choose between earning a wage and celebrating." Most of the 200,000 BBCs (British-Based Chinese) also carried on working, with traditional festivities confined to the night before, when sucking pigs were consumed, paper money was



burnt and mah-jong was played by all. Only in the embassy did London's Chinese community appear to be enjoying a day off. The phone rang unanswered all day — but then again, they may have simply decided not to talk to the world. The phone had not been answered the day before, either.

Pouting pretty

THERE is nowhere better to promote the cause of feminism than in the pages of *Penthouse*, the New York writer Emily Prager told her audience on the South Bank, where she was reading last

night. Prager is in London to promote her new book, *Eve's Tattoo*, and London feminists are not convinced that a serious woman writer should be leading a double life as the intellectual playmate of the month in one of the world's leading soft porn magazines.

But Ms Prager assured them there is no conflict between her ideological position and the appearance of her column in such an ideologically unsound publication. "I assume the missionary position in *Penthouse*," she told the astonished assembly of London's literati. Lie back and think of liberation?

Iron will
IN THE face of stories that the unveiling of Hyde Park's Queen Elizabeth Gate has been delayed by up to two years due to lack of funds, the model of Giuseppe Lund's design will go on public view for the first time tomorrow at the Roy Miles gallery in Berkeley Square. The organisers hope that the public will be inspired by the miniature to dig deep to raise the £1.5 million required. But they insist that the project is not in jeopardy.

"We raised £25,000 in the last fortnight alone," says organiser Richard Briggs. "Today we have had so much mail I haven't even opened it." The project has taken longer than expected, he insists, simply because the scheme has grown. "Originally it was only a gate and we needed less than £1 million. Now it's 120 feet long with ten acres of landscaping." A blacksmith is standing by. British Steel has donated the materials, the designs are virtually complete and despite reports to the contrary, they insist the gate will be installed by Easter next year and the Queen Mother herself will do the honours.



...and moreover

ALAN COREN

I wish, this morning, I were chiselling words out literally. Of a granite slab, in the open street, with fingers chipped and blue as the stone. But I am not. I am chiselling them out only metaphorically. It is how I generally describe the job of getting words out, because, literally, it is a hedge against prevarication and when inquisitive laymen ask me about the nature of the job, creative process, I smile this shy dismissive smile I have and I say I don't know about any of that. I just climb into the roof of a morning and start chiselling words out. This may sound phony, but if you are a hack and someone asks you how you go about it, there is no way of not sounding phony, and anyway it is like that. Except I do not actually use a chisel.

But Keith actually uses a chisel. When inquisitive laymen ask Keith about the nature of the demolition process, Keith doubtless smiles this shy dismissive smile he has and says I don't know about any of that. I just climb onto the roof of a morning and start chiselling bricks out. That is where he is now, banging away at my chin-processor. The difference is, I am inside and Keith is outside. From time to time, we glance at one another through the attic window, and when this happens, I type even faster. The words I type are meaningless and when I have finished typing them, I press the key which

deletes them, but Keith doesn't know this, he just thinks I'm working my fingers to the bone.

At least, I hope he does. I even underscore that hope by looking variously morose and frantic. I tear my hair, I pinch the bridge of my nose, I hurl balls of paper into the bin, I swear as noisily as I can. I want Keith to know this writing game is not all beer and skittles, just sitting in the warm and tapping at a keyboard. I want Keith to glance at me and think, look at that poor sod, I may be out here in this sub-zero gale risking life and limb, but at least I am not in there going stark raving mad, what a life, how does he do it, day after day?

I want Joe to think that, too. Joe is the plumber. Joe is downstairs replacing the boiler which will be attached to the new flue after Keith has finished demolishing enough of the chimney to poke the new flue through. Thus, in order for Joe to think that, too, I have to trudge downstairs from time to time, so that Joe can hear me cursing and see me looking morose and frantic. You may think this unnecessary, since Joe is not out on the freezing roof watching me sitting in the warm and tapping at a keyboard, for all Joe knows I might have gone out to work before he arrived and be down the mine right now hewing at the coalface with a canary gasping its last beside me. But I did not go out to work before Joe arrived when Joe arrived. I answered the door. In my dressing-gown. Which I found it necessary to explain at

once by lying to Joe about being up until 5 am typing, why do we kill ourselves, Joe, we only pass this way but once, there has to be more to life than...

Then there is all the supine work, which is what hacks have to do in between chiselling. I normally do this in the attic, but if I do so today, Keith will see me, and if I do it downstairs, Joe will see me, and if they see me they will not understand that I am doing some deep thinking, they will think I am doing some deep kipping, so I shall have to do it in the bedroom, and if they chance to catch me at it when they are carrying pipework through, I shall have to say I have this terrible headache. It comes of staring at a VDU all the hours God gave, a lot of writers have to retire early, and no pension to speak of, Keith...

They already know it's a very physical job. Manual labour, really. We established this yesterday, at wash-up time. We all used the sink in the kitchen to get the muck off, it's a filthy business, typing, people don't realise, and I went Owl Owl and Joe and Keith said what is it, and I said you mean you've never read about Repetitive Strain Injury, it's a very serious wrist complaint you get from typing, some writers end up crippled, and Joe and Keith said get away, really, dear old dear.

Why blue collars should not make white ones feel guilty, but not vice-versa, who can say? It's no good asking me, that intellectual wossname is all above my head. I just chisel words out.



OFF THE TARGET

In the hair-trigger pre-election jungle, the undergrowth has only to rustle for guns to blaze. Bryan Gould for Labour was in the butts yesterday unleashing a volley at the government over its alleged opposition to European proposals on the environment. "Either we take the environment seriously or we don't," said Mr Gould. Mr Gould's ostensible target was the British government's attitude to "new" proposals on environmental impact assessments (EIA) to emanate from the European Commission. His target was a phantom, avidly given substance by yesterday morning's BBC. The pattern for the coming campaign is thus clearly set.

There are no new proposals. Last October a plan seeped from the lower reaches of the ever-eager Brussels bureaucracy for new procedures for environmental impact assessments. At present, a development plan is brought to a certain stage of ripeness at which point it is subject to an EIA. The costs and benefits are weighed before a decision is made by the national government concerned as to whether or not the project should go ahead. The Eurocrats wanted to substitute for this a procedure whereby environmental considerations were brought into the equation by law, when first a development proposal came under discussion.

The British did not agree. The Brussels proposal was impractical. Was it really suggested that whenever two people set down to discuss whether castles in the air should be turned into buildings on the ground, they should be forced by law to commission a costly study of the environmental merits of the proposal? The Eurocrats, more used to a continental insouciance towards the letter of the law, did not agree but went away to think again. They are still thinking. No proposals have been put before the European Commission, let alone before the Council of Ministers. All that was said on behalf of David Trippier, the British minister, yesterday was that Britain still did not think such proposals as these would work.

The British government is not opposed, as Mr Gould chose to imply, to environmental impact assessments. It has adopted Brussels proposals enshrining EIAs in community law. It puts itself on the back for being a community "progressive" in these matters. Confusion has been caused in the case of seven big projects, including the Twyford Down extension of the M3, because Britain may not have complied precisely with EC rules on these assessments. This is a matter of dispute between the government and Brussels. But on EIAs generally Britain is behaving well. Spain and Germany are taken to court on environmental matters five times more often than Britain.

Mr Gould should have taken a different line of attack. Affirming Labour's concern for the environment, he should have taken a nationalist line and said that such matters should not fall within the competence of Brussels. Carlo Ripa di Meana, the Italian environment commissioner with a gargantuan reputation in Britain for double standards, has done little to stop the Germans killing off their forests or his own country fouling its beaches. Brussels, Mr Gould might have said, lays down over-elaborate conservation rules which extend beyond the regulation of European commerce or even the protection of continental environment. It meddles for the sake of it.

Labour could even have argued that any British government that really cared for the environment would not need a nanny in Brussels to keep it in order; that Labour would so order things as to sustain subsidiarity and the supremacy of Parliament. As it is, Mr Gould is so eager to use any stick to beat his opponents that all sense of proportion in matters European has been abandoned. As long as the Conservative government is sceptical about many edicts emanating from the European Commission headquarters, so long will Labour regard them all as encapsulating the highest virtue. And there could be three months of this still to come!

NOTHING ON THE RADIO

The bids for a second national radio network announced yesterday are a depressing comment on the continuing fiasco of government broadcasting policy. Phone-ins and 1960s pop-music — known in the trade as "Gold" — have become the staple fare of much of Britain's commercial radio. They represent no real challenge to the government-backed BBC radio network. While public and private-sector television rival and to an extent enhance each other, public and private-sector radio seem to exist on separate planes.

The government's strategy for expanding radio by auctioning wavelengths for new national commercial networks is still gripped by the dogma that blighted the Channel 3 television auction last year. This is that in a free market in wavelengths, the price offered the Treasury should be everything and quality and range of choice nothing. The auction the Radio Authority is required to hold precludes even the exceptional consideration of quality the Independent Television Commission introduced last autumn.

The first condition for a successful radio bid is that it must be capable of meeting the exorbitant cost of renting public-sector transmitters, a price partly dictated by union agreements. The second is that the bid must be realistic in the present harsh economic climate, so that the new company does not go out of business. The first requirement makes the second harder to meet. The third requirement, once these are met, is that the winning bid must be higher than all other bids. There is no quality threshold, no public-service element, no policy of widening the range of choice available to the listener in this oligopolistic market. With likely start-up costs of £10 million and an annual transmitter rental of £1.5 million, the system might have been designed to discriminate against programming innovation in favour of market-maximising blandness.

Bidders were announced yesterday for a second national commercial radio service, known as INR2, which will take over BBC

Radio 3's slots in the medium waveband. The winner will have nonstop album rock and pop-music from a market already saturated with such fare yet bereft of, for instance, classical music or full-time news. Even so, the lack of any bid from Capital Radio, London's main pop-music commercial station, suggests that a national network might not be able to leap the financial hurdles put in its way by the Home Office.

Capital points out that what has made commercial radio attractive to listeners and advertisers is a local connection. But except in the biggest conurbations, even local radio cannot build an adequate audience unless it appeals to the most popular of all markets, that for mass-market pop. The one experiment in minority-interest broadcasting, London's troubled Jazz FM, has not yet proved that any other format can work. High costs imposed by the regulator would play havoc with any station's economics.

The highest bid yesterday, of £4 million by the Independent National Broadcasting Company, may well be judged too generous. The Radio Authority could regard it as inviting the fate suffered by Showtime, the originally successful bidder for the first national commercial wavelength, which failed to raise the downpayment it had promised. Its successor, a classical music channel, has also been in trouble. More plausible is the £1.9 million bid from a partnership of TV-am and Virgin and chaired by TV-am's chairman Bruce Gynge. His company lost its television franchise last autumn.

None of yesterday's bids, however, promise innovation and excellence in radio broadcasting. That is less the fault of the broadcasters than of those who made the rules. The price-only franchise auction was supposed to prove that an unregulated private sector (commercial radio) could give an over-bureaucratised public sector (the BBC) a run for its money. So far it has merely demonstrated the opposite.

AN ILL WIND

The financial debacle in the Outer Hebrides has apparently brought a rush of interest in tourism in the archipelago. Interminable rain, gales recorded one day in six, scarce trees and even scarcer entertainment have been as nothing compared to a £24 million black hole in the council's budget thanks to the collapse of the Bank of Commerce and Credit International. Calls have poured into the island's tourist office and an extra 10,000 brochures have been ordered.

The islanders are having to pay off the BCCI debt to the tune of £2.7 million over 30 years. This may be partly offset by the largesse showered on them by the European Community, this year of £1.4 million to the tourist industry alone. Now the Hebrides has become home for the latest form of disaster rubber-necking. We are used to drivers slowing to inspect cars crashed on a motorway, flocking to view a shipwrecked ship or hunting for ghoulish souvenirs after an air catastrophe. The scene of a famous murder sometimes attracts so many on-lookers that residents plead for street names and house numbers to be changed. Just occasionally the notoriety has been turned to good effect, as with tours of "Jack the Ripper's London" or with the block on which Mary Queen of Scots was beheaded in the Tower of London.

But the scene of great financial disasters have as yet passed unnoticed. The shift of millions from profit to loss has remained a secret of the account books and the financial pages of newspapers. A debt, however huge, is but a dash of red ink. However many

noughts can be added to the fraudster's takings, no tourists have come to ogle the books, no blue plaques have been erected, no brochures printed by the thousand.

The Outer Hebrides are changing that, and changing the ecology of tourism in a recession. Blue-rinse Americans will pour into Stornoway pleading for a sight of the many Macleods whose misfortune it was to preside over the BCCI fiasco. They will file silently into the room in which the awful cheques were signed. They will gasp at a sight of the council minutes. For a huge surcharge, they may even shake hands with the mayor whose terrible duty it was to call for resignations.

Where will this end? Dozens of venues in the City of London are clearly still virgin territory for similar exploitation. The recent selling of the contents of Robert Maxwell's flat in the Mirror building was a reckless squandering of precious assets to a future museum of corporate villainy. Coachloads of tourists could soon day-trip to the De Lorean car factory in Northern Ireland (perhaps enlivened by frequent showings of the FBI videos in which its inventor stars). A Museum of Wasted Effort would feature Blue Streak, TSR2 and British Rail's famous tilting train. School parties would watch working trade union leaders organising authentic picket lines, while civil servants would patiently explain subsidies that involve paying farmers to pull up their hedgerows and then paying them to put them back again. The Outer Hebrides is in the vanguard of a lucrative trend.

Force of law on unpaid bills?

From Mr Alistair Sampson

Sir, Many small firms are going to the wall rather more briskly than they otherwise might because of the cavalier and cynical way in which some individuals and firms fail to come up with payment when it is due, even overdue.

Unless otherwise specified at the time of sale, a vendor should be entitled to charge a purchaser interest at say 3 per cent over base rate on all bills outstanding for more than 60 days. Thus would cash-flow be improved nationwide and financial bullies brought to book.

Surely one could count on the support of the three main parties. No one could reasonably oppose a legislative measure which oils the wheels of commerce and protects the little man.

Yours etc,
ALISTAIR SAMPSON,
103 Clifton Hill, NW8,
February 3.

Business letters, page 19

West Bank water

From Mr Burt Keimac

Sir, It is wrong to state (leading article, January 29) that Israel denies water to Arab villagers on the West Bank. Israel has been operating a water-sharing scheme between the West Bank and territory inside the pre-1967 borders to the advantage of Arab residents.

In an average year about three million cubic metres are pumped from Israel to Arab users in the West Bank, while about half a million cubic metres are pumped back into Israel. In addition there are over 300 Arab wells operating in the West Bank and only 17 Israeli-owned ones.

Because of improvements in water-works in the whole of the West Bank, there are 3,500 cubic metres of water per hour available in the region. In 1967 domestic water use was 5.4 million cubic metres, or about five cubic metres per year per person. Today that figure is nearly 25 cubic metres.

All of the 450 villages in the West Bank now have running water and sewerage, and irrigation for farms has been increased by 150 per cent since 1967.

The West Bank is a natural aquifer that must serve the entire population of the region. The recent heavy precipitation has allowed Israel to pump millions of cubic metres back into ground sources, thereby restoring supplies for everyone.

Yours faithfully,
BURT KEIMAC
(Deputy Director,
Britain/Israel Public Affairs Centre,
21-22 Great Sutton Street, EC1,
January 29.

Origins of skiing

From Mr Leif Mills

Sir, Mr John Dahl (letter, January 27) claims that a former world skiing champion, Bjørndal Blom, was one of the five members of Amundsen's expedition to reach the South Pole in 1911. Not so.

Mr Blom was not one of the five people; they were Amundsen, Bjaaland, Hansen, Hassel and Wisting. Neither was Mr Blom one of the three others (Prestrud, Stubberud, Johansen) who were on the expedition but explored the land to the west of the Bay of Whales. Nor was Mr Blom the cook (Lindstrom) who stayed in the hut during the expeditions. Nor was Mr Blom the Norwegian on Scott's expedition — he was Tytgve Gran.

Yours sincerely,
LEIF MILLS,
31 Station Road,
West Byfleet, Surrey.

Mantegna cartoons

From Lady Price

Sir, I am in total agreement with Sir Roy Strong's proposal (letter, January 29), in which he stresses the importance of the Mantegna cartoons being rehoused in a setting which is more appropriate to their magnificence than Wren's Oratory at Hampton Court Palace.

Might not the right place be the superb new Sainsbury wing of the National Gallery?

Yours faithfully,
ROSEMARY E. PRICE,
16 Laxford House,
Cundy Street, SW1,
January 31.

Absent fathers

From Mr Trevor Berry

Sir, Devina Lloyd's claim ("Where did Daddy go?", Life and Times, January 28) that almost half the fathers desert their children following parental separation because "these absentees simply found staying in touch too difficult and distressing" should be challenged.

I know of no significant research which analyses the reasons for the undoubtedly high drop-out rate. Given the adverse effect of parent loss on children this is an area in urgent need of responsible investigation.

Yours truly,
TREVOR BERRY
(National Chairman,
Families Need Fathers,
BM Families,
London WC1N 3XX,
January 28.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Drugs that can beat 'the black dog'

From the President of the Royal College of Psychiatrists

Sir, Your readers hope that your leading articles will lead: both in giving information and in recommending how that knowledge should be used. Instead of this, your article "The slough of despond" (January 31) simply purveys conventional ignorance and thereby adds to the gloom surrounding the subject of depression.

Yes, everyone does "suffer from the glooms", but certainly not everyone suffers from depressive illness. Yes, it can be postulated that feeling down may have spurred some few talented people to achieve even more. What, however, is beyond dispute is that depressive illness impairs the ability to work at all for a large number of people.

Depression is a major factor in the majority of the more than 4,000 suicides that occur in this country each year; it damages countless family relationships, sometimes permanently, and causes the sufferer to feel miserable and worthless, losing all pleasure in life.

Rather than blur the issue, your leader-writer would have done better to describe the clear distinction between "understandable misery" and depressive illness. It is this latter that is the target of the Royal College of Psychiatrists' "Defeat Depression" campaign, which you so admirably reported on the same day.

We hope to lessen the stigma attached to suffering from depression, increase its recognition both by doctors and sufferers themselves, and inform the public that it is

most often an eminently treatable condition.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW SIMS, President,
The Royal College of Psychiatrists,
17 Belgrave Square, SW1,
February 3.

From Mrs Adrian Cowell

Sir, Your leader created a very misleading impression. I can assure you, as someone who has been fighting "the black dog" for months, that the great achievements of Churchill and others would have been simply impossible had they been in the grips of the despair I have known.

The sort of depression for which I was prescribed drugs is a life-threatening force, leaving the sufferer with no interest in a world that has inexplicably become totally pointless. The achievement of anti-depressants is not that they offer bottled happiness, no "holy grail of eternal bliss", but just a return to the normality that one previously enjoyed, the strength to face the ups, downs — and indeed unhappiness — that must be expected of life.

The drugs redress an imbalance in the chemicals of the brain associated with depression, they do not raise happiness to an artificial level. Nobody who has not experienced it can possibly understand the sheer overwhelming joy of a return to unexciting normality.

Yours faithfully,
FIONA COWELL,
Hatfield Priory,
Hatfield Peverel,
Nr Chelmsford, Essex,
January 31.

Falklands in review

From Mr L. L. Grey

Sir, Tom Pocock (book review, Life and Times, January 30) says that *One Hundred Days* was "written by the officer whose orders resulted in [Lieutenant David] Tinker's death and that of some 250 of his fellow-countrymen: the victorious Task Force Commander, who is now Admiral Sir John Woodward".

This is emotive stuff which unfairly lays blame on a distinguished naval officer. The Task Force Commander was, in fact, Admiral Fieldhouse, the then Commander-in-Chief Fleet, and the deaths were caused, not by any military commander, but by the Argentinian invasion of the Falkland Islands.

If personal blame is to be accorded to anyone, the name is "Galtieri". I wonder if Tom Pocock attributes responsibility for the half million British world war two casualties to Churchill or to his distinguished military commanders? The idea is surely absurd but, even worse, it adds to the anguish of those entrusted with command.

Yours faithfully,
LEE GREY,
Two Bridges, River Road,
Taplow, Maidenhead, Berkshire,
January 31.

From Mr David Witherow

Sir, It is not hard to understand how some of our forces in the Falklands war must have felt about news

reporting of the conflict, isolated and in great danger as they were.

The suggestion, repeated in Admiral Sir John Woodward's new book, that the BBC World Service had broadcast reports which compromised British action caused surprise and distress at Bush House at the time. We examined the accusations thoroughly and remained convinced that they were unjustified.

Argentine commanders had no need to use BBC World Service broadcasts as a source of information when this was being made freely available to the world's media by official British sources. We could hardly be expected to censor information officially approved, and we were certainly more cautious than some other sections of the media.

In the case of Goose Green, there had been intense worldwide media speculation about the next moves following the San Carlos landing, spurred on by the political need in Britain for news of military success. Two British newspapers even reported that Goose Green had been captured two days before this happened — headlines that would have been instantly available to international news agencies serving Latin America.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID WITHEROW
(Deputy Managing Director,
BBC World Service,
Bush House,
PO Box 76, Strand, WC2,
January 31.

Elephant protection

From the Director of the Kenya Wildlife Service

Sir, Whilst I would agree with the remark in your leader of January 29, "An ivory white market", that the elephant enjoys better protection today, it is too early to assume that it is safe.

You mention that the demand for ivory in Europe and North America will never be the same and you are probably right. None the less, a little more time and your observation will be confirmed. The elephants need more time and I am recommending that the moratorium (or ban) on the ivory trade be extended for at least another three years. Trade in other products such as hide is not the issue.

Milton Keynes lessons

From Mr Harley Sherlock

Sir, Chris Barnett (letter, January 30) praises the "free flowing traffic" at Milton Keynes. But at its first sight desirable state of affairs is made possible only by spreading a comparatively small number of people over a large area of land. I prefer the compact city, which takes up less land and (because journeys are shorter) involves less fuel consumption and therefore less pollution.

Above all I see the close-knit city in

the European tradition as capable of providing the necessities and pleasures of life close at hand. Let us make sure that this potential is attained and our urban environment generally improved before squandering scarce resources on more scattered communities which will never solve the problems of South-East England.

Yours faithfully,
HARLEY SHERLOCK,
13 Alwyne Place, N1,
January 31.

From Mr J. H. Arrowsmith-Brown

Sir, Has Devina Lloyd ever contemplated the enormous pressure put on divorced fathers to lose touch with their children?

When my grandson was 18 months old, my son's wife decided on divorce, with care and control to herself. Every person involved, judge, social worker, even my son's own lawyers, were unanimous that only the mother could care for a small baby, believing the myth that Devina Lloyd put forward.

My son left the court with few rights in his son but that of housing and maintaining both child and mother. He received "defined access", and in the next two years was given a bitter lesson in how feeble was the law to enforce the access it had ordered.

Thanks largely to the devotion between father and child a second court case has produced for my son a

less satisfactory result, but the article has led me to consider the present generation of fathers whom I know personally.

I can think of no father, whether married or not, who does not take a very full share in the upbringing of his children; this no doubt is because I know no mother who does not welcome her partner's full participation.

Would it not be better in these matters to consider each case on its merits, instead of making up our minds in advance on the basis of case studies which are bound to be unrepresentative?

Yours truly,
J. H. ARROWSMITH-BROWN,
22 Macaulay Buildings,
Bath, Avon.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071) 782 5046.

Toms, Dicks and Daniels in Lords

From Professor Lord Belloff, FBA

Sir, John Grigg's somewhat intemperate attack upon the present composition of the House of Lords ("Accident of birth", January 30) cannot be taken seriously without more of an indication that he has thought through possible alternatives and their consequences. All he tells us is that the members of a new Upper House should be "elected" or "nominated for life".

In both cases, how big is the membership to be? In the case of an elected House, how does he propose to avoid conflict between two Houses each enjoying democratic legitimacy? In the latter case, what incentives would he provide to see that its members were willing to give up the time and make the efforts needed to carry out the increasingly arduous business which now falls upon a revising chamber?

Discussions of all institutions should begin from an examination of functions, and then see how the personnel can be chosen to carry them out. It is hard for members of the general public to know what the House of Lords does since the "quality" press gives so little space to its work.

If John Grigg had not disclaimed his inherited title, I suspect he would know a great deal more about what goes on and might feel differently about his notions of reform.

Yours truly,
BELOFF,
House of Lords,
January 30.

From Mr John M. Ross

Sir, John Grigg unwittingly puts his finger on the very reason why "accident of birth" should provide access to the House of Lords, and why I hope that young Daniel Moynihan will find his way there. It is the "nonsense factor" which Mr Grigg so derides that provides the governor in the complicated clockwork of British legislative processes: it is the guarantee of our particular brand of democracy.

Members of the Commons cannot be representative of a true cross-section of British society since they are a kind of elected elite. Even motivated by the best intentions, they are beholden to party lines, often driven by ambition and, in any case, of a certain cast of mind to have put themselves forward for election in the first place. Were British democracy to be dependent upon this group of individuals alone it would be a poor thing indeed.

For centuries we have been saved from the tyranny of such antiseptic formulae by the existence of a legislative chamber to which accident of birth has enabled (and ennobled) entry by shrewd businessmen, idiosyncratic politicians, landowners, lazy good-for-nothings, the unemployed, the very young, the antique and the occasional criminal (among many others). If they bother to attend the Lords, it shows they care, personally.

Here's to the accession of young Daniel Moynihan, whatever his origins, and let us pray that a public school education will not make him too much of an "English gentleman" to speak his mind and offer fresh lights on the issues of his day.

Yours truly,
JOHN M. ROSS,
The Old School,
Dunwich, Suffolk,
January 30.

From Mr H. B. Brooks-Baker

Sir, I have seen nothing in recent press comment about the "new Lord Moynihan" to explain the fact that the House of Lords will need to see a Moynihan divorce certificate with the "fourth wife", the mother of Andrew, the marriage certificate with Moynihan's "fifth wife" and the birth certificate of Daniel, the son from the "fifth marriage".

We are told that these papers exist, but so far as I am aware no newspaper or public body has yet viewed them.

The House of Lords may be a nonsensical institution, as John Grigg claims, because it has hereditary peers as legislators. However, the Upper House, which is composed of people from all walks of life, is arguably the most successful Upper House in the Western world — a house composed of former Labour leaders, ex-politicians, dentists, draftsmen, artists as well as the traditional landowner.

Yours faithfully,
H. B. BROOKS-BAKER
(Publishing Director),
Burke's Peerage,
12 Rickett Street, SW6,
January 31.

Persecution, please

From Mr Tom Benyon

Sir, Advocates for the decade of evangelism might ponder that in the United Kingdom, where over the years the established church has been given every encouragement to prosper, the number of believers has steadily declined. However, in China and the Soviet Union, where Christianity has been outlawed, it has flourished. May I suggest that British evangelists learn from a winning formula and press for a decade of persecution?

Yours faithfully,
TOM BENYON,
The Old Rectory,
Adstock, Buckinghamshire.

OBITUARIES

FRANCIS TIBBALDS

Francis Eric Tibbalds, architect, planner and urban designer, former chief architect planner for Milton Keynes, founding chairman of the Urban Design Group 1979-1986, president of the Royal Town Planning Institute 1988, and chairman of Tibbalds Colbourne Karski Williams. He died of cancer on January 26 aged 50. He was born on October 16, 1941.

DESPITE his early death, Francis Tibbalds had already led a remarkably varied and influential career. He combined the professions of architect and planner with the championing of the new discipline of urban design as the means of assessing and responding to the views of local communities on their environment. He was aided in this by exceptional talents and fluency as a draftsman and a willingness to speak his mind freely and forcibly in public.

Tibbalds was educated at Farnham Grammar School and qualified in architecture at the Regent Street Polytechnic where he gained a distinction. He then qualified as a town planner at University College, London, where he met his future wife, Janet McDonald.

His subsequent career spanned public and private practice in a remarkable way. He worked in several architectural offices and then in the planning Department at Guildford before being appointed chief architect planner for the Milton Keynes plan. Subsequently he became principal architect planner at the City of Westminster and then deputy planning officer at Lambeth until 1974.

In 1975 he became director of planning at Llewellyn Davies Weeks, where the overseas commissions included the master plan for the centre of Tehran. He then founded his own architecture and planning practice in 1978 with four colleagues.

The next year saw the launch of the venture closest to his heart, the



Urban Design Group as a forum for a discussion of a wide range of hotly debated urban problems. He had recently been exploring, with a developer client, the possibility of establishing a national centre for urban design in Westminster.

As president of the Royal Town Planning Institute in 1988 he brought major issues forcefully into the arena of public debate, his cogent pronouncements containing much more sense than those of presidents of the sister institute, the RIBA. He subsequently sat on English Heritage's London advisory

committee, was senior vice president of the European Council of Town Planners and a visiting professor at the Bartlett School of Architecture and Planning.

Tibbalds will be remembered less for his architectural work, which included one of Croydon's little loved office towers, than for his numerous local plans. The emphasis here was strongly visual: almost everyone in his office could draw. He would analyse closely the quality of the existing environment, highlighting the good elements, and showing the opportunities for new

development without prescribing individual solutions in advance (a method which underlay the monotony and anonymity of many previous post-war developments). He took a strong interest in outdoor spaces, in their size, services and the degree of enclosure. He will be remembered especially for his contribution to the recent revival of the city centre in Birmingham and the scheme for Hackney town centre.

In recent years he was involved in the major proposals for Hammer-smith Broadway, Wimbledon town centre and King's Cross. Later he

has been involved in proposals for Princes' Dock in Liverpool and Spitalfields in London. Among overseas projects he took particular pride in the planning work he did for Melbourne, in which he sought to show how the qualities of the turn of the century plan could be upheld and helped to hold in check the enormous commercial pressures on the city.

Tibbalds died at home after a long illness though he remained energetic and vigorous until the end. He leaves his widow, Janet, and two sons Adam and Benedict.

DOM GEORGE TEMPLE

Dom George Temple, CBE, FRS, Sedleian Professor of Natural Philosophy, Oxford University, 1953-68, and honorary fellow of The Queen's College, Oxford, died on January 30 aged 90. He was born on September 2, 1901.

ONE of Britain's leading applied mathematicians, George Temple became a monk in 1930 after the death of his wife and joined the Benedictine community of Quarr Abbey, near Ryde, Isle of Wight. While he spent his academic career at the frontiers of knowledge in his subject, delving into relativity or the quantum theory, he had another side to his intellect: he quietly pursued the interest in theology that had occupied him all his adult life. For him the physical world that he explored was not inconsistent with the beliefs that he devoutly held. He had a straightforward, intelligent but simple faith which accommodated his inquiring mind: there was no tension between the two regions of his thought. As a monk he continued his theological studies while remaining active in the mathematics which took him to The Queen's College for a week or ten days once a year.

1964; he grew interested in the theory of vibrations and in the theory of distributions. In his ease of movement between pure and applied mathematics he was in the best tradition of British applied mathematicians. It was entirely fitting, therefore, that his Oxford chair should be a chair of natural philosophy, and that his research students should write their theses sometimes in pure mathematics and sometimes in applied.

Elected FRS in 1943 he was at various times president of the London Mathematical Society, the Mathematical Association and the International Union of Theoretical and Applied Mechanics. In Oxford his urbane figure soon became well known. He had spells on the Hebdomadal Council and the general board of the university, and was first chairman of the mathematics faculty when this was established in 1963. His long association, as external examiner, with the Irish universities was recognised by an honorary DSc from the National University of Ireland in 1962. He also received an honorary degree from the University of Western Ontario.

In 1930 Temple married Dorothy Lydia Carson of Liverpool and their home life was a singularly happy one. He played an active part in the Newman Society, and



was active on many other committees. For some time he was on the council of Oxford.

His range of interests was wide. Typically he picked on interesting problems before they became fashionable, wrote a few papers full of insight and then moved on to some other topic. His classical knowledge and historical sense led him to devote himself in his later years to the history of mathematics, and on retiring from the Sedleian Chair he embarked on an ambitious project resulting in publication in 1981 of *100 Years of Mathematics*.

Temple was a man of delightful courtesy and charm, though capable of trenchant comments. He was disciplined in his monastic observance and in his use of time, wasting none of it. For relaxation he read widely including Dickens, C. P. Snow and Peacock.

Eitan Livni, a leader of the Irgun, the militant Jewish independence movement in British mandated Palestine, has died in Israel, aged 72. He was born Yehuchan Bismowitz in Gerdona, Poland, in 1919.

ON THE night of April 2, 1944, a few dozen Jewish insurgents sabotaged railway stations and bridges along 25 miles of line in Palestine. They belonged to the Irgun group, headed by Menachem Begin, which had begun a campaign of violence against the British administration in Palestine at the beginning of that year.

On their retreat, after accomplishing their mission and losing two of their men in cross-fire incidents with the army, the insurgents found themselves encircled by British soldiers of the 6th Airborne Division on the dunes of the Mediterranean coast. They had no alternative but to raise their hands. The British were not immediately aware that among the captured men was Eitan Livni, the commander of the operation who had been on the British wanted list for several months. He was a member of the Irgun high command and Begin's right-hand man.

His arrest was a blow to the clandestine Jewish movement, which was more offensive in character than the Hagana, the mainstream underground Jewish group which — as its Hebrew name declares — was more defensive. Livni together with 31 others, was tried in Jerusalem by a military court on June 27, 1944, and sentenced to 15 years.

His imprisonment was one of the reasons for the Irgun's decision to launch its most militarily spectacular anti-British operation: the attack



on May 4, 1946, on the crusader fortress at Acre. The fortress, which was being used as a prison by the British, had successfully withstood a siege by Napoleon's forces in 1799 when it was in Ottoman hands and had been captured by Allenby in 1918.

The Irgun assault on the fortress was a finely coordinated operation involving action both inside and outside the prison, explosives having been smuggled in beforehand. Livni masterminded the operation inside and the escapes included 30 Irgun men, 11 members of the Stern group — an extremist breakaway group from the Irgun — and many more Arab prisoners. Away from the fortress however they encountered a group of passing British soldiers and in the

battle that ensued nine Irgun men were killed.

Livni then resumed his leadership role in Irgun, in spite of being hunted by the British, and in August 1947 was dispatched by Begin to organise Irgun's military activities against British targets in Europe. He returned nine months later on May 15, 1948, the day the British withdrew from Palestine and modern Israel was declared.

In the war that then began with the Arab forces Livni led the first Irgun battalion into the newly-formed Israel Defence Forces and was a commander in one of the fiercest battles against the Arabs in the Sharon district east of Tel Aviv.

Following independence Livni became chairman of the Irgun veterans' organisation but in the 1970s, as a result of



Eitan Livni, as a member of the Israeli Knesset, and as he appeared, under an alias, on a wanted poster in British-mandated Palestine.

pressure from Begin who was by this time the leader of the parliamentary opposition, he was elected a member of the Israeli Knesset. He remained there for three terms and helped to bring about the rightwing Likud coalition which gained power in 1977.

Livni, renowned for his integrity and humbleness, was not very much at home as a politician however. He regarded his years during the anti-British armed revolt in the 1940s as the most important period of his life and kept his underground name Eitan. In his autobiography, published in 1987, he refused to write about his life after the independence of Israel declaring: "Nothing I have done afterwards could have been compared to the days of the rebellion which I and my friends have experienced in battle and prison."

He is survived by his wife, Sarah, and three children.

ALEC GRANT

Alec Grant, a Master of the Queen's Bench Division of the Supreme Court, has died aged 59. He was born on July 27, 1932.

ALTHOUGH originally destined for a career in the catering trade, Alec Grant became a Harrow worth law scholar, president of the Oxford Union and a barrister with a very substantial practice before being appointed a Queen's Bench Master in 1982.

He was born into a family much involved in local politics. His father had been mayor of Finchley. Alec Grant's interest in politics and his moderate socialist leaning remained with him all his life.

Educated at Highgate School, Grant was commissioned in the Royal Artillery in 1951 during national service. He went to Merton College, Oxford, and took an active part in the life of the Union of which he was a popular member. He was

elected president in 1956. Having abandoned thoughts of a career in catering for one more suited to his talents, Grant was called to the Bar in 1958. He soon acquired a substantial practice including a proportion of defamation work. At an early stage he began libel reading for *The Observer* where he found the atmosphere of a newspaper office much to his liking. Long after the time when he might have been expected to have given up this work he stayed on because he enjoyed it.

Journalists subject to his questions sometimes enjoyed it less. While his knowledge of the law of defamation frequently enabled him to save a story by the suggestion of minor, but judicious, alterations, he was also liable to suggest changes not because a story was defamatory but because he simply refused to believe it.

Thus, presented with an account of a zoo-keeper who

had taken a lion into a meeting of a local authority to protest at the inadequate grant being provided, Grant demurred. It was defamatory to suggest any responsible keeper would do anything so dangerous, he said. Not until the journalist had got the keeper to repeat the entire story on the telephone to Grant did he allow it to appear. Even then he got the last laugh, discovering in the course of the conversation that the keeper's name had been wrongly spelled.

Although standing once, unsuccessfully, in a parliamentary election — for Labour in Hendon South in 1964 — he focused his attention on local politics. He served on Middlesex county council, from 1961 to 1965 and on the GLC, from 1964 to 1967 and again from 1970 to 1973.

His particular interest was in the advancement of higher education. He served on the Court of Governors of the

Thames Polytechnic from 1972 until his death and as its chairman from 1982 to 1985. He also served on the governing body of the School of Oriental and African Studies, becoming vice-chairman.

In 1982 he accepted an appointment as a Queen's Bench Master. This work was particularly well-suited to his talents. His fast working brain and encyclopaedic knowledge of both procedural and substantive law enabled him to dispatch the business with great speed, accuracy and justice. He played a major editorial role in the production of *The Supreme Court Practice*, the procedural bible for civil practitioners. The same virtues as lawyer and former politician enabled him to make an outstanding contribution both in the general field of continuing law reform and the implementation of the legislation arising from the Civil Justice Review. He was unmarried.

APPRECIATIONS

Dom Gregory Murray

THE death of Dom Gregory Murray (obituary, January 30) has deprived the Catholic musical world of a unique genius and a remarkable, complex man. His formidable musical gifts allied to a monastic vocation never co-existed comfortably; for him, his talent was irksome and he never fully enjoyed the fruits of his musical labours. Performing was more a duty than a pleasure and one sensed that he failed to resolve the monastic and musical conflict that raged within him throughout his life.

But it is a great loss that none of the many live recitals he broadcast on the BBC from Downside Abbey in the 1930s has been recorded. He encompassed a wide repertoire but his real affinity lay with the late Romantics and in particular with Elgar and Delius. He was especially proud of a work he wrote for string orchestra entitled "Homage to Delius". Fortunately a recording of this does exist and is in the BBC and Downside archives.

Compositionally he will be chiefly remembered for his many Organ Interludes writ-

ten mainly for the organist of more humble ability. They provide the kind of music, so essential in liturgical functions, to fill those awkward silences caused by the late arrival of clerics, extended communions and mistimed processions. It was in this



field of improvisation that he was so prodigiously gifted. Only a few weeks before his death he twinkled at me as he improvised on a theme from Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto while the cowed monks solemnly processed to their choir stalls.

Philip Fowke

John Sparrow

AS A Cambridge graduate in mechanical sciences whose name had been put forward by the Foreign Office I was one of the first group of visiting fellows accepted in 1966 by All Souls, and serving, as I was at the time in Peking, I wondered what the College would think.

On arrival I met John Sparrow (obituary, January 25) for the first time knowing that he had seen the scheme for visiting fellows as one of the least acceptable ways of meeting the criticisms of the Franks report. He could not have been more charming or more

welcoming to a disparate bunch from all over the world, most, but not all, academics, but some like myself with qualifications utterly foreign to All Souls.

My wife will never forget his kindness when, persuaded no doubt unwillingly that their ladies should be shown some hospitality, she found herself seated at his right hand at a ladies' night. The first bottle of claret was pronounced as corked, and, she assumed, consigned forthwith to the Warden's lodgings. The second was, of course, admirable.

But no one could have been kinder to us all.

Sir Michael Wilford

CARLETON SHUGG

Carleton Shugg, who played a leading role in building the first nuclear-powered submarine, died on January 23 in Mystic, Connecticut, aged 92. He was born in 1899.

BRITAIN's current nuclear deterrent was partly the work of Carleton Shugg. As president of the General Dynamics Corporation's Electric Boat division in the late 1950s he was responsible for the Polaris programme's first submarines, the *George Washington* and the *Patrick Henry*.

His initial work on submarines was, however, more humanitarian than lethal. Studying means of salvage and rescue for stranded underwater crews, he helped to invent the diving bell which proved invaluable when the submarine *Squalus* sank in 1939.

His first contact with atom-

ic energy came with a brief post-war stint as general manager of the Hartford photomium works, and in 1948 he was put in charge of reactor development for the Atomic Energy Commission. In that role he was responsible for assigning Hyman G. Rickover, then a captain and later to become known as the father of the nuclear submarine, to take charge of a new Navy project on nuclear propulsion.

When he joined Electric Boat in 1951, first as general manager and then as president, Shugg worked with Rickover on the development of the *Nautilus*, the first nuclear submarine, and on its more sophisticated successors. He retired in 1965. Carleton Shugg's first marriage ended in divorce, and his second wife died in 1967. He is survived by two daughters and one son.

FEB 5 ON THIS DAY 1807

WOLVERINE
Buried in what can best be described as a chapter of accidents is one piece of hard news relating to the war against Napoleon.

FROM THE JAMAICA PAPERS.

KINGSTON, NOV. 29. — Late on Thursday evening last week a duel took place at Port-Royal, between Lieut. H. of the Royal Artillery, and Lieut. S. of the Second West India Regiment of Foot, when, on an exchange of shots, the former was severely wounded in the breast.

The following vessels, captured and detained by *La Pique* frigate, arrived on Monday, viz. the Spanish brig *El Cabarito*, in ballast, out of Porto Rico by her boats; the French felucca, *La Surprise*, of one gun and seven men (19 being absent on prizes), taken off the same island; a French sloop, with logwood, captured off San Domingo. The *Resistance* frigate, of 32 guns, Captain Adam, arrived at Port-Royal the same afternoon. She sailed from Plymouth on the 4th ult. with despatches for the Governor and Admiral.

We understand that the *Resistance* has brought accounts of a powerful force being about to be sent out to the West Indies, intended to take possession of some part of the Spanish dominions, which his Catholic Majesty has determined to deliver over to Great Britain to protect it from the rapacious grasp of the Corsican Usurper.

December 13
Arrived the *Mary*, on the 30th ult. at 5 PM, near Cayenne, she described two strange sail standing towards her, from which she endeavoured to escape, taking them to be French cruizers. At 10 PM they came up with her, when she sustained a running action with them till daylight next

morning, when, having her bowsprit killed, her Captain and several men wounded, her main-mast and bowsprit seriously damaged, six or eight shot between wind and water, her sails and rigging much shivered, and after using every exertion against her supposed enemies, with no great reluctance Capt. CROW was compelled to strike but to his great satisfaction, the two vessels proved to be His Majesty's ships, *Dart* of 30 and *Wolverine* of 18 guns.

Captains SPEAR and COLLIER were extremely sorry for the accident, and rendered Captain CROW every assistance in their power. On the 8th inst. the *Mary* spoke the *Drake* sloop of war, all well.

A race was run on Thursday last, on the Parade at St. Ann's, between Captain M's bay mare and Mr C's chestnut poney, which afforded very little sport to the amateurs of the turf, but was attended with many serious accidents, and one most lamentable catastrophe. On starting, the mare proved restive, but the poney went off in good style, and would have distanced the other before she took the course, had not a negro boy imprudently crossed immediately before the poney, by which the rider, a Gentleman named MAIREN, was thrown, and the negro had his knee lacerated; by which the mare had the opportunity of coming up, although it still proved a dead-heat in favour of the poney. The fall of Mr MAIREN being perceived by his father, (a respectable man in the Naval Storekeeper's department) he, with many others, set off in full gallop to his assistance; but in a moment, a Gentleman coming in contact with him, he was precipitated to the ground, and the horse on him, bearing his whole pressure on his chest, which instantly deprived him of speech, and, notwithstanding medical aid was immediately afforded, after lingering totally insensible for three hours, expired without a groan, leaving a widow and eight children.

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 5 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL

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● FOCUS ON MBA 22-26
● SPORT 27-30

TODAY IN BUSINESS

TWO TO TANGO



Europe's industrial training budget will reach £3.5 billion by 1997 but Jacques Delors and Sir Leon Brittan cannot agree how the money should be spent
Page 19

NAMING NAMES

Lloyd's names will apply for an injunction to stop Lloyd's from enforcing cash calls by drawing down on their deposits
Page 17

WRONG NUMBER

Customers do not like BT; nor do most of its employees. A staff survey shows despair and disenchantment
Page 17

MBA FAIR

Tomorrow and Friday the Business Design Centre at Islington, North London, stages the MBA Fair, sponsored by The Times.
Special Report
Pages 22 to 24

NICE FIGURES

Being a Labour party member does not endear Neil MacKinnon to Norman Lamont nor do his economic forecasts
Page 17

THE POUND

US dollar 1.8010 (+0.0050)
German mark 2.8690 (-0.0046)
Exchange index 90.9 (same)
Bank of England official close (4pm)
STOCK MARKET
FT 30 share 1978.7 (-5.5)
FT-SE 100 2556.8 (-3.4)
New York Dow Jones 3233.68 (-0.44)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 21999.60 (-139.99)
INTEREST RATES
London: Bank Base: 10%
3-month interbank 10% 10%
3-month single bid 10% 10%
US: Prime Rate 6%
Federal Funds 3 1/4%
3-month Treasury bills 3.85-3.89%
30-year bonds 10 1/4-10 1/2%
CURRENCIES
London: New York
£ \$1.8010
£ DM 2.8690
£ Sfr 2.5801
£ FF 6.5470
£ Yen 126.10
£ Ind 90.9
£ CU 131.1599
£ ECU 1.405291
£ SDR 1.287722
London forex market close
GOLD
London Fixing:
AM \$356.35 pm \$356.00
close \$356.20-356.70 (£197.70-198.20)
New York:
Comex \$356.05-356.55
NORTH SEA OIL
Brent (Feb.) \$18.40 bbl (\$18.33)
RETAIL PRICES
RPI: 125.7 December (1987=100)
* Denotes midday trading price

Court of Justice confirms ruling

Bae need not repay £44m of sweeteners

FROM TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

THE European Court of Justice has ruled that, for the moment at least, British Aerospace does not have to repay the £44.4 million it received in "sweeteners" from the government in 1988 to buy Rover Group.

The court yesterday confirmed an interim decision, made before Christmas by Walter Van Gerven, EC advocate general, that while the commission was substantially correct in ruling the Rover aid illegal, it overstepped its powers in telling the government to repay it.

Bae said it was pleased with the decision, but the case is embarrassing for the government, which has only escaped the commission's anti-

trust clutches by default. The decision also leaves the commission embarrassed, because the Rover case was a cause célèbre in the crusade to wipe out unfair state aid to EC industry.

Sir Leon Brittan, the competition commissioner, merely put out a statement yesterday noting that the court had found nothing wrong with the substance of the case against Bae.

Sir Leon's spokesman said there were three options open to the commission:
□ To drop the case.
□ To complain to the court that the UK government had not respected conditions laid down by the commission for the Rover sale in 1988.
□ To open a new case against Rover, under the state aid

code article 93 of the Treaty of Rome, which would allege that the government paid additional aid to Bae, which it concealed from the commission.

In 1988, the commission gave its blessing to the Rover sale on the basis that the purchase price should be £150 million, the government having been allowed to write off £331 million of Rover's £800 million debt.

The commission then found that the government had allowed Bae to defer its payment for 18 months, and that it had paid an additional £9.5 million to help the company buy out minority shareholders, and an extra £1.5 million to cover legal costs. Instead of going to the court or opening a new procedure, however, the commission wrote to the government, telling it to take the money back.

A commission source said: "The Court of Justice judges have always been procedural sticklers. It's too early to say what we're going to do. The decision is the second in the past month by the court criticising the commission's procedure. The court said the commission had under-used its powers when considering an appeal by La Cinq, the struggling French television channel. In that case, the commission said it could not take interim measures on behalf of La Cinq in its attempts to join the European Broadcasters' Union. La Cinq went to the Court of Justice, which ruled the opposite.

Brittan beats challenge

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

SIR Leon Brittan, the EC competition commissioner, has defeated an attempt to shackle his powers to vet company mergers in Europe.

An agreement to make cosmetic changes to the commission's consultation on difficult merger cases is set down in a note to today's commission meeting. Confirmation that Sir Leon's powers will remain virtually unchanged brings to an end a dispute that has been bubbling inside the commission since a decision to refuse an aircraft

manufacturing merger in October. Sir Leon blocked the purchase of de Havilland, the Canadian aircraft maker, by ATR, the Franco-Italian consortium, on the grounds that it would produce undue concentration in the market.

A note to the commission meeting records that the "existing procedure should be maintained". That process leaves key decisions in the hands of a single commissioner and his officials.

Fight for control, page 19

British Gas to raise levy for energy trust

BY ROSS TIERMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Gas is planning a levy on household gas bills to fund an independent trust, with a first year budget of up to £20 million, to promote energy efficiency. Exploratory talks with the energy department are aimed at making the trust the nucleus of a new national energy saving agency with a budget in 1993-4 of £120 million.

Up to £80 million could come from the government and the electricity industry, where Stephen Littlechild, the regulator is keen to promote more energy efficiency measures. In the current year, the government's energy efficiency office has a budget of just £42 million.

The British Gas trust scheme is expected to provide subsidies to encourage householders and small businesses to insulate buildings and buy more efficient appliances.

Environmentalists and economists argue that privatisation has encouraged construction of new supply facilities, raising customer bills,

even when it is more cost-effective to reduce demand.

The British Gas proposals come in response to pressure from Sir James McKinnon, head of Ofgas, the gas industry regulator, for measures to cut the amount of energy wasted and to reduce the fuel bills of poorer families.

The scheme will strike at the profitability of British Gas, which makes more money for every additional therm of gas sold. But the company is likely to console shareholders with the argument that promoting efficiency will help secure its market against competition from other fuels.

Sir James has said he is prepared to allow British Gas to "pass through" the cost of an energy efficiency programme to its 17.5 million tariff customers, made up of households and small businesses, when new tariffs are implemented on April 1.

According to the regulator, a levy of 3p per household each week, with matching contributions from British

Gas, could fund a £50 million a year programme.

The scheme devised by British Gas envisages the creation of an independent trust fund with six trust agencies, set up to address specific areas in which efficiency of gas use can be readily improved. These are - combined heat and power schemes, condensing boilers, cavity wall insulation, home energy audits, fuel poverty projects and informative meters.

British Gas said: "Details of the proposed trusts are still being finalised. This is an important new initiative being drawn up with the support of Ofgas and the government's energy efficiency office to give new impetus to energy management."

□ British Gas shares fell 4p to 245p after Hoare Govett, the broker, said the effect of Office of Fair Trading proposals for the reshaping of the gas market would change British Gas from a trading to a transport company.

Your oil is our oil, says Brussels

FROM TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

THE slogan "It's Scotland's oil" has not yet rallied overwhelming support to the nationalist cause north of the border, but the sentiment may yet be unstaged by Brussels, where the latest cry is: "It's Europe's oil."

For Antonio Cardoso e Cunha, the energy commissioner, has suggested that Europe may need a strategic oil reserve, and ultimately could buy up North Sea oil supplies from Britain, the EC's only producer, and "communitarise" 90 per cent of production. As a concession, he said any country's exchequer would be compensated for loss of revenue by the commission.

British officials contacted yesterday expressed amazement that the idea had surfaced, believing it to have been killed in behind-the-scenes talks. One described it as "Euro-lunacy at its best". British officials were also amazed that sources in Brussels close to Senhor Cardoso had even mentioned the North Sea requisition plan. "We've told him time and again that the EC doesn't need an energy reserve," said one official. "When US bombers went into Iraq, the

price of oil went down, not up. The markets can sort it out themselves."

At an international economic forum in Davos, Switzerland, Senhor Cardoso outlined his idea for a strategic oil reserve, while steering clear of where the oil would come from. The commissioner linked the plan to his other controversial crusade - an EC energy tax to curb carbon dioxide emissions. Senhor Cardoso said the tax could only work if oil prices were kept high. He added that a reserve would also help give the Community more clout on the international stage.

It was the Community's virtual impotency in affecting oil prices during the Gulf war that led the Portuguese commissioner to pursue his ideas. Senhor Cardoso has based the outline plan for an EC reserve on America's strategic petroleum reserve, which has helped Washington to avoid any undue pressure from nations belonging to Opec.

The American reserve, stored partly in disused mineshafts, comprises about 500 million barrels of oil. Britain, the Community's only significant oil nation, produces about 1.3 million barrels a day

from the North Sea. Senhor Cardoso realised that he had two options for his plan - to buy in oil stocks, or virtually close down the North Sea. He consulted Britain on the latter plan last year.

"We told the commission that it's just not that simple," said the British official.

"You can't simply close an oilfield and just have a tap when you want to move the markets a little. A constant pressure has to be maintained, and then there's the problem of the gas as well. And the high cost of recompensing the exchequer would just not make it worthwhile."

The official said that less radical oil-reserve plans suggested by the commissioner had been rejected in 1990, and that the strategic reserve "stood no chance at all of even getting through the commission."

Senhor Cardoso's spokesman confirmed, however, that the idea is very much alive. "Countries could be compensated for their loss of oil revenue," he said. "Yes, that effectively means Britain."

Fight for control, page 19



Going shopping: John Callaghan, chief executive of Fyffes, which is looking for investment opportunities

Sterling support is double forecast

BY COLIN NARRABROOK

BANK of England intervention to support the pound last month was double what the City forecast, according to the latest Treasury figures, but represented just a fraction of the bank's huge reserves.

Fears that sterling would require massive support in the new year appear to have been unwarranted. Underlying reserves fell \$336 million in January. This compares with total reserves at a historically high \$44.6 billion.

Early last month, the pound dropped to its lowest since joining the European exchange rate mechanism in October 1990, frequently threatening to go through its effective ERM floor. But well-timed intervention and government reassurances helped the currency recover.

In America, Alan Greenspan, the Federal Reserve chairman, said further interest rate cuts were under consideration, if needed, as an "additional insurance" to boost the sluggish economy. He reaffirmed his view that he does not expect a "double dip" recession and still believes that the monetary easing to date will be sufficient to produce recovery.

Nicholas Brady, the American treasury secretary, meanwhile sought to highlight some encouraging signs for the economy. He said the decline in interest rates could this year save American families as much as \$25 billion in interest costs on mortgages and other household debt. He said the economy could be given a quick stimulus if Congress approved proposals for growth outlined last week by President Bush in his State of the Union message and his fiscal 1993 budget.

Right figures, page 17

'Times' preferred in boardroom

BY OUR BUSINESS STAFF

The Times is read by more captains of industry than any other general daily newspaper, according to a new MORI poll.

Asked which newspapers they read yesterday, 47 per cent of business leaders replied The Times, against 36 per cent Evening Standard, 29 per cent Daily Telegraph, and 29 per cent Independent. The specialised Financial Times was read by 81 per cent.

Asked which business section was most useful for company information, The Times was read by 43 per cent (45 per cent last year), more than the other two white broadsheets combined. The Independent was read by 21 per cent (24 per cent) and the Daily Telegraph by 20 per cent (34 per cent). For City information, the specialised FT rated 87 per cent (86 per cent).

TOP FOR CITY NEWS

FINANCIAL TIMES	% Reading
THE TIMES	47%
THE INDEPENDENT	21%
THE DAILY TELEGRAPH	20%
THE EVENING STANDARD	19%
THE SUNDAY TIMES	18%
THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH	15%
THE SUNDAY MAIL	12%

The Sunday Times, at 75 per cent, was read by more business leaders than its rival broadsheets combined.

MORI's annual captains of industry survey covered a random sample of about 100 of the 500 largest industrial companies in Britain. Of the sample interviewed, three quarters were either chairmen or managing directors.

Cash-rich Fyffes in market

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH

FYFFES, the Dublin fruit and vegetable wholesaler best known for its imported bananas, is sitting on a cash pile of Ir£100 million (£93 million) and is looking for investment opportunities. The group, which has been a net borrower for only one month in 1991, said last year that it was interested in Del Monte, the fresh fruit operation of Polly Peck International.

Fyffes made pre-tax profits of Ir£27.1 million in the year to the end of October, an increase of 3.3 per cent on last time. Turnover increased by 9.1 per cent to Ir£608 million. Earnings per share were unchanged at Ir£0.73p. The final dividend is Ir£0.62p, a 10 per cent increase on last time giving a total dividend for the year of Ir£1.14p, up 10 per cent.

John Callaghan, the chief executive, said the results were satisfactory, with solid results in the UK and Ireland.

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BY KAREN WOOLFSON

A Swiss Bank spokesman said: "Swiss Bank will argue that there will be no grounds for changing its grading and

He added: "Could you imagine if all three ratings

Tempus, page 18



One region which has taken his message to heart is Mid-Wales. Its population has increased by 8 per cent to 218,000 since the early Eighties, and it has far lower unemployment than the rest of Wales. This is largely the

This means that almost 20 per cent of the population is involved in manufacturing in a region which 14 years ago was purely agricultural.

The range of estimates for Iran, traditionally hard to track, was 3.35 million to 3.6 million bpd. Reuters puts Iranian January output at 3.5 million bpd, with some of the 150,000 bpd increase due to rises in capacity and draining tanks at export terminals.

VW in Polish talks

[illegible]

Lloyd's names are ready to fight forced cash calls

BY JONATHAN PRYNN

A GROUP of several hundred Lloyd's names are expected later this month to apply for an injunction preventing Lloyd's from enforcing cash calls by drawing down on the names' deposits.

The move, which has sparked controversy among existing names action groups and their advisers, comes at a time when thousands of names face financial ruin this spring. The first of the latest round of cash calls to pay for recent huge claims fall due on March 2 and draw-downs are expected to begin shortly after that date. Many names could in theory lose their homes because of bank guarantees put up as part of the deposit.

The deposits, which names must place in the hands of

their agents when joining Lloyd's, are drawn down when names fail to meet cash calls from their other financial resources. If Lloyd's is prevented by an injunction from drawing down deposits, shortfalls on cash calls would have to be paid from central Lloyd's funds, currently estimated at about £450 million.

Michael Freeman, a partner of the law firm, Michael Freeman & Co., is to send out a mailshot today to more than 6,000 names on nine of the worst hit Lloyd's syndicates to invite them to participate in the injunction application. In the letter, Mr Freeman said that "names have a strongly arguable case to initiate applications for injunctions preventing members' agents

from enforcing the calls that have been made."

The names are on syndicates managed by the Flettr, Goods Walker, Devonshire and Rose Thomson Young underwriting agencies. All the syndicates specialised in writing high risk excess of loss reinsurance business.

Mr Freeman's move has attracted bitter criticism from some solicitors acting for other distressed names. A lawyer at one firm has written to a group of names claiming that the injunction application would "cut away the ground" from under existing action groups and "had not been thought through with the same degree of care" as the actions being prepared by other firms.

The lawyer alleged that Mr Freeman's injunction would have to claim damages for breach of contract or negligence and that this could effectively bar the existing action groups from bringing proceedings on behalf of the same names.

They also said that Mr Freeman's action could hold up the Lloyd's loss review panels set up to investigate the biggest losses of the disastrous 1988 to 1990 underwriting years.

Mr Freeman has rejected the allegations, claiming that names cannot afford to wait for "the possibility of legal action at some stage in the indeterminate future" because of the imminence of the draw-downs. He added that the proposed injunction proceedings had "nothing to do" with the action group investigations.

None of the existing names action groups have yet given official advice to their members on whether to join Mr Freeman's action, but Alfred Doll-Steinberg, chairman of the Goods Walker Action Group, said that "anyone who does anything sensible to halt the Lloyd's juggernaut...deserves our sympathy at least." He added that the action group was considering contributing to the cost of the injunction.

Mr Freeman, who is the solicitor to the Oakeley Vaughan names, who currently have a case against Lloyd's in the High Court, has estimated that a fund of £120,000 would be needed to cover the maximum potential costs of the action. About 600 participants, contributing £200 each to the fund would be needed. Five test cases would be used in the injunction application.

Mr Freeman said that he hoped that the application would be in the court by February 20. There has already been a "tremendous response," with 180 individuals signing up or giving a commitment.

Left leaning City scribbler with the right figures

BY COLIN NARBROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE Treasury's dismal forecasting record might warrant the government re-hiring Neil MacKinnon, who accurately predicted British growth, or more precisely the lack of it, for the past two

years, and is looking for a hat-trick in 1992.

Mr MacKinnon's talent for being right, however, is unlikely to be enough to endear him to Norman Lamont, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, since the chief economist at Yamaichi International has been a paid-up member of the Labour party since his teens.

Among City scribbles, Mr MacKinnon, aged 36, remains something of an oddity for his political leanings, of which he makes no secret.

Born and educated in Liverpool, but from Scottish crofting stock, Mr MacKinnon says that he always suspected the unbounded optimism the government fostered in the Eighties.

Perhaps it was his background of kirk and thrift that made him suspicious of the "supply side miracle", even while working at the Treasury when Nigel Lawson was the Chancellor.

Instead of being entranced by the statistical and mathematical model worlds of the Treasury economists, Mr MacKinnon kept a close eye on macro-economic developments.

The crucial difference between Mr MacKinnon and the Treasury lay in the evaluation of the build-up in debt, in both household and corporate sectors, under the Lawson boom.

Mr MacKinnon saw this inevitably leading to a long and drawn out recession, not the shallow dip the government wanted to see.

The high interest "cure", and taking sterling into the deflationary grip of the exchange-rate mechanism, only compounded the agony, in Mr MacKinnon's view. Crucially, he believes, the Treasury ignored the negative wealth effect the collapse in the housing market would have on the consumer, the key to recovery.

Mr MacKinnon is keen to point out that his prognoses of 0.8 per cent real growth in the gross domestic product in 1990, and a 2.5 per cent decline last year, are not the product of political bias. Since leaving the Treasury in George Street for the City in 1986, his career has been performance-related.

"Poor results and I'm out of a job," he said.

This year, Mr MacKinnon has forecast 0.8 per cent growth, but considers it could prove a touch optimistic, given the slowdown in Germany that could adversely affect British exports.

Eurotunnel plays down issue report

Eurotunnel, developer of the Channel tunnel, has played down French news reports that it is considering issuing shares to TML, the construction consortium building the £8 billion tunnel, as a way of settling its long running dispute over the so-called lump sum works on the project.

TML is claiming more than £1.2 billion from Eurotunnel, on works originally budgeted at around £625 million.

Eurotunnel said: "Various possibilities have been explored in the course of discussions with TML aimed at settling the disagreement on the cost of the work, but at present there is no agreement in prospect." Eurotunnel shares dropped 15p to 445p.

Trust rises

Fleming Claverhouse Investment Trust has paid a fourth-quarter dividend of 3p, making 10.5p for the year to end-December, an increase of 5 per cent. The net revenue available to shareholders fell by 6 per cent to £2.03 million. The net asset value per share at the year end was 339.3p, up 15 per cent. The share price rose 24.5 p.p.c.

Elga cash call

Elga Group, the laboratory equipment specialist, is to buy Carboline for a maximum of £4.94 million. About £4.26 million will come from a rights issue with the balance from loan notes. Elga also plans to change its name to Protean. The shares eased 1p to 99p.

Marston issue

Marston, Thompson & Evershed, the brewer, has raised £15 million through an issue of 20 year debenture stock. The coupon is 10.25 per cent, giving a yield of 12.25 basis points over the 9 per cent 2008 gilt.

Heritage hope

Heritage, the USM-quoted household goods wholesaler, has trimmed pre-tax losses to £96,000 (£198,000) in the six months to end-October. Turnover declined to £5.36 million (£5.82 million). There is no interim dividend, but shares rose 3p to 28p.

BP reclassifies

British Petroleum's £2.7 billion a year nutrition division has been reclassified as "non-core" and told it must operate without central funds.

Leaseback deal

Bromsgrove Industries, the engineering group, is to sell and leaseback five freehold properties occupied by subsidiaries for £4.03 million.

Macquarie sale

HILL Samuel, TSB's merchant bank, is planning to sell off a 16 per cent non-voting stake in Macquarie Bank, its Australian associate.



Satisfying the panel: Rocco Forte will give more information in the next report on his company's policy on property values

Forte accounts investigated

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH

THE Financial Reporting Review Panel, the official watchdog for company reports and accounts, has investigated the annual report of Forte, the hotel and leisure group, after a complaint from Austin Mitchell, the Labour MP, over four aspects of the group's accounting policy.

The group, headed by Rocco Forte, son of Lord Forte, the business's founder, has agreed to give more information in its next set of report and accounts on its policy on non-depreciation of freehold and long leasehold buildings following the panel's investigation.

The investigation covered accounting policies adopted by Forte in respect of capitalisation of interest; the accounting treatment of expenses on major information technology projects; the absence of depreciation on freehold and long leasehold properties; and the variance between the date of signing of the balance sheet and of the auditors' report.

Having discussed these matters with the directors of the company and Price Waterhouse, its auditor, the review panel says it is satisfied with the explanations provided and has concluded that there is no cause for action in respect of any of the four matters investigated.

The panel believes, however, that it would be helpful if the company provided more

information concerning its policy of non-depreciation of freehold and long leasehold buildings.

Forte has agreed to make it clear in its next set of report and accounts that the company's appraisal of residual values is based on prices prevailing at the time of acquisition or subsequent valuation of the property in question, and that its policy is to make provision in the profit and loss account in the event of the occurrence of any permanent diminution in property value.

Donald Main, Forte's finance director, said: "How we account for these aspects

of the company's business is straightforward and in accordance with the Companies Act and the Accounting Standards Authority but clearly the review panel has to follow up any queries."

This is the fourth investigation for which the review panel has published its findings although it has undertaken other investigations of complaints about company reports and accounts, which it has subsequently found to be groundless. The other known investigations were into Williams Holdings, Ultramar and Shield Group.

Williams and Ultramar voluntarily agreed to give more

information in their next set of accounts and Shield agreed to restate the bones of its accounts at the interim stage, according to Sydney Treadgold, the panel's spokesman.

Forte's shares fell 2p to 225p. Warrants on the group's £93 million eurobond are exercisable at 226p on March 10.

Mr Main denied that the group was concerned about the share price level. "The exercise of the warrants is up to the holders. There is nothing we can do. We are quite relaxed about it. It's not a vital factor in our financial strategy," he said.

De Benedetti attacks IBM

BY OUR EUROPEAN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

CARLO de Benedetti, the Italian financier who has recently taken on management control of Olivetti, has launched an extraordinary attack on International Business Machines (IBM), accusing IBM of pursuing a "Trojan horse" strategy by buying up stakes in rival European computer makers.

Signor de Benedetti said that Olivetti has been approached by IBM about the possibility of forming an alliance between the two groups. Signor de Benedetti believes that such an agreement would only lead to further

strengthening of IBM's dominance of the market.

His comments come a week after IBM struck a wide-ranging co-operation deal with Groupe Bull, the French computer company and one of Olivetti's main European rivals. Under this deal, IBM and Bull will share technology and manufacturing facilities, and there are also plans for IBM to take a stake of between 5 per cent and 10 per cent in Bull.

In an interview with *Corriere della Sera*, the daily Italian newspaper, Signor de Benedetti said: "What IBM

proposed to us and which we refused, belongs to the class of Trojan horse (alliances) in which one pays a small price to buy what is in effect a distribution network." He said "we thank (IBM), but we decline the offer as Olivetti has no interest in becoming a distributor of IBM's products."

In a separate development, Francis Lorentz, president of Bull, said yesterday that Bull was working closely with the French treasury on a new refinancing plan.

Fight for control, page 19

Electrolux maintains dividend

BY WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU, EUROPEAN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

ELECTROLUX, the world's largest white goods maker, surprised financial markets when it held its dividend for the 1991 financial year, despite a sharp fall in profits.

The company, whose brand names include Zanussi and Frigidaire, said in a provisional results statement yesterday that profits after net financial items were down from SwK1.41 billion to SwK1.03 billion (£98 million), a fall of 27.3 per cent. The decline was expected and was due to the recession in some of the company's main markets, including America and Britain.

Total turnover was also down, from SwK82.4 billion to SwK79.1 billion. The dividend, at SwK12.5 for each free B share, is the same as last year. Market analysts had expected a cut in the dividend, so the news boosted Electrolux B shares to SwK246, a rise of SwK10.

The profit figure includes SwK250 million worth of restructuring costs, which were taken into the fourth quarter results, during which net profits were down at SwK135 million, compared with SwK398 million in the fourth quarter of 1990.

O&Y weighs up Canary Wharf deal

BY MATTHEW BOND

OLYMPIA & York, the Canadian property group, is to decide over the next few days whether wealthy private individuals should be invited to participate in a refinancing of part of its £3 billion Canary Wharf scheme in London Docklands.

Such a refinancing could be achieved by selling one of the buildings at Canary Wharf to a property enterprise trust, a unitised investment vehicle that passes on the tax allowances available on buildings in enterprise zones to the individuals investing in the trust. Buildings in enterprise zones qualify for

100 per cent capital allowances.

The building being considered for such a sale is Number 10, Cabot Square, whose tenants include Ogilvy & Mather, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, CNA Reinsurance and the Maersk company. At almost 600,000 sq ft it is, barring the main skyscraper, the biggest building in the first phase of the project.

Assuming a theoretical average rent of £25 a sq ft and a yield of about 7 per cent, it would be worth £200 million. That would make it by far the largest deal involving a property enterprise trust.

O&Y has no British profits

to set such allowances against and has therefore always been keen to pass on the allowances, as part of a building by building refinancing of the project.

Last year, for instance, an unnamed British bank bought one of the smaller buildings at the project for between £50 million-£100 million, while Credit Suisse First Boston acquired a long leasehold interest in the 550,000 sq ft building it will move into early next year. The year before O&Y completed a £500 million interim refinancing with a syndicate of European and North American banks.

O&Y's outlay to date is be-

lieved to be approaching £1.5 billion, most of which has been funded from internal credit lines and asset sales. Despite the progress O&Y has made in letting space at Canary Wharf, refinancing such developments remains difficult in the present market. For example, a £600 million refinancing of the project's central skyscraper that began in autumn 1990 is only expected to be completed later this spring.

O&Y is not known for giving away equity in any of its projects, and it is likely that any refinancing will include a call option enabling O&Y to buy the building back after a specified number of years.

BT has trouble getting through to its workers

BY ROSE TIEMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE substitution of inconspicuous grey and white vans for the bright yellow vehicles traditionally beloved of British Telecom may come as a welcome relief for their occupants: according to a wide-ranging survey of BT employees, only one third are proud of their company and 44 per cent fear for their jobs.

The annual employee survey at Britain's biggest telecoms group found a mood of deepening despair and disenchantment among the workforce. Thirty-seven per cent of the 60,049 employees surveyed failed even to return their questionnaires. The 4 per cent decline in the proportion of forms returned, com-

pared with 1990, serves only to confirm the poor state of morale.

This is not entirely surprising. BT has shed thousands of operators and middle managers as it struggles to improve efficiency in the face of growing pressure from Ofel, its regulatory body.

Views about the changes being pushed through by BT management were mixed. Fifty-four per cent of BT's workforce believe customers are benefiting from the changes, an increase of 6 per cent over the past 12 months. But 52 per cent disagree: clearly, some have trouble making up their minds.

The survey also found increasing proportions who believe that BT now gives a better, quicker response to

customers. Many in the workforce also rated their immediate bosses reasonably highly. But they were critical of senior management, with only 22 per cent believing senior managers communicate effectively.

Of course, an anonymous survey always provides a welcome chance to tell management some home truths you would hesitate to voice face to face. But the findings confirm the scale of the management task faced by Michael Hephher, after just five months in the job of group managing director.

"My biggest concern is that people are less proud to work for BT today than they were a year ago," he said. "It would be easy to lay some of the blame on the economy and

the general pessimism in the country, but that is only a small part of the story. I recognise that the major issues are ours, and that it is up to us to resolve them."

Mr Hephher promised speedy, though unspecified, action to look at how BT can better recognise the skills and achievements of its employees. He also promised better communications.

Managers in other parts of industry may take heart from the knowledge that even a company whose very business is communications finds it hard to talk to its own workforce.

Employees at BT, on the other hand, may take comfort from the knowledge that competition brings a choice of employer.



Hephher: speedy action

IMPORTANT NOTICE

ELECTION OF ONE SPECIAL AND FOUR REGIONAL MEMBERS TO THE MILK MARKETING BOARD - 1992

The Milk Marketing Board hereby announces as follows:

- The Board have determined the retirement date for 1992 as midnight on Tuesday, 28 July 1992.
- One Special Member of the Board and one Regional Member for each of the North-Western, Southern, South Wales and Mid-Western Regions have to be elected.
- The Board are prepared to receive nominations of candidates for these elections. Such nominations must be received by the Board at the Board's offices at Thames Ditton, Surrey, not later than 4.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 3 March 1992.
- Every person so nominated as a candidate for election as a Special or Regional Member of the Board must deposit with the Secretary of the Board not later than 4.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 3 March 1992, the sum of £200.
- No person shall be qualified to be elected as a Special Member of the Board unless he or she has been nominated in writing as a candidate by at least twenty registered producers.
- No person shall be qualified to be elected as a Regional Member of the Board for an English Region unless he or she has been nominated in writing as a candidate by at least twenty registered producers entitled to vote in that election or by a County Branch of the National Farmers' Union in the Region.
- No person shall be qualified to be elected as a Regional Member of the Board for a Welsh Region unless he or she has been nominated in writing as a candidate by at least twenty registered producers entitled to vote in that election or by a County Branch of the National Farmers' Union in the Region.
- A person may not be a candidate for election as a Special Member and as a Regional Member at the same time.
- A candidate may withdraw from his or her candidature by a written notice to the effect provided it is delivered at the offices of the Board at Thames Ditton, Surrey, not later than 4 p.m. on Tuesday, 10 March 1992.
- Any election literature issued by or on behalf of a candidate should bear the name and address of the person issuing it and the name of the candidate on whose behalf it is issued.

NOTE: Candidates in the Special Member elections of which notice is given on this page may be interested to know that the Board have agreed to offer each properly nominated candidate (if more than one) the opportunity for a 1,000 word election address, prepared by the candidate and reproduced by the Board, to be distributed with the voting papers to producers at a cost to each candidate of £500.

Candidates in Regional Board Member elections of which notice is given on this page may be interested to know that the Board have agreed to offer each properly nominated candidate (in contested elections) the opportunity for a 1,000 word election address, prepared by the candidate and reproduced by the Board, to be distributed with the voting papers to producers in the relevant Region, at a cost to each candidate of £100. Candidates who wish to avail themselves of these services must submit a copy of the election address to the Secretary of the Board at Thames Ditton, Surrey, so that it and the relevant fee are received by him not later than Friday, 20 March 1992. If advance notice of an intention to make use of the service can be given it will be administratively most helpful.

Throwing rocks in power's pool

Nothing could highlight better the absurdities of the privatised electricity industry than the threat by big industrial users to refuse to pay the 11 per cent nuclear levy on their bills. That is, naturally, the reason for this somewhat childish threat. This equivalent of a poll tax rebellion worked once in the days of nationalisation but sits ill in a world of private, commercial contracts. The levy to the state-owned nuclear generating industry, though hated, is merely a handle to complain about a prospective 25 per cent rise in bulk electricity bills due to the rise in the smoothed average pool price of electricity, which is largely down to the commercial behaviour of National Power and PowerGen.

Sympathy for the big users, who may find themselves fighting an unequal battle against continental rivals enjoying privileged cheaper suppliers, should be tempered by their lack of nous in contract negotiations. Few had much idea how the pool would operate. Lord Marshall of Goring, former chairman of the CEBG did, as probably does Lord Hanson, the suitor of PowerGen. Users who welcomed direct contracts with the big generators were clearly not among that small number. The argument that they should pay less for power through the pool than the distribution companies owes too much to hindsight.

The risks brought by competition were bound to increase the required rate of return on new power station projects, especially those being developed by the new independents. What had not been realised was that, even in a recession, the big companies had the market power to sustain or push prices up to something like the long-run marginal costs of new station, including the required higher rate of return on capital. This is, indeed, the paradox of competition. To gain the undoubted and already visible benefits in pressure on both capital and operating costs, newcomers have to be enticed in by returns greater than those needed overall by the traditional generators with written down plant.

In the short run, demand for electricity is somewhat insensitive to price, so the big generators have been closing down old plant to make sure there is no surplus, thus justifying their own new efficient gas-powered station projects. They no longer have obligations to supply at fixed prices. About 5 gigawatts, something like 8 per cent of usable capacity, has either been closed down or is on the way out. If the big companies were broken up, as Stephen Littlechild, the industry's regulator, has threatened, these old coal-fired stations would not be closed. Their operating costs are relatively high, but capital costs are written off so they could remain quite profitable at low prices were it not for the merit order system, taken over in the private pool, which brings in power from stations with the lowest operating costs first.

To achieve full competition, the big companies would need to be broken almost into individual units, so owners would not have a mix of old and new stations. Professor Littlechild is attempting a compromise of forcing the reluctant big companies to sell redundant power stations. The list of potential buyers might be limited. In any case, atomised competition would merely lead to an unstable and potentially violent cycle of prices and station building that would damage both industry and customers in the long run.

If the design for privatisation was severely flawed, there are therefore no magic structural solutions. Higher risk does require higher returns. Big users and generators will have to improve the system gradually by changing the relationship between contracts and pool prices so that the tail does not wag the dog. Eventually, new competitors, who have hardly yet got going, will help drive costs down.

EC free market champions fight for upper hand against intervention

As the commission meets to settle its budget, George Brock examines the forces seeking to shape industrial policy

In the closing minutes of the European Community's Maastricht summit in December, 12 weary leaders knuckled down to the intractable problem of the treaty's clauses on "industrial policy". The draft text in front of them bore the marks of hand-to-hand fighting between governments.

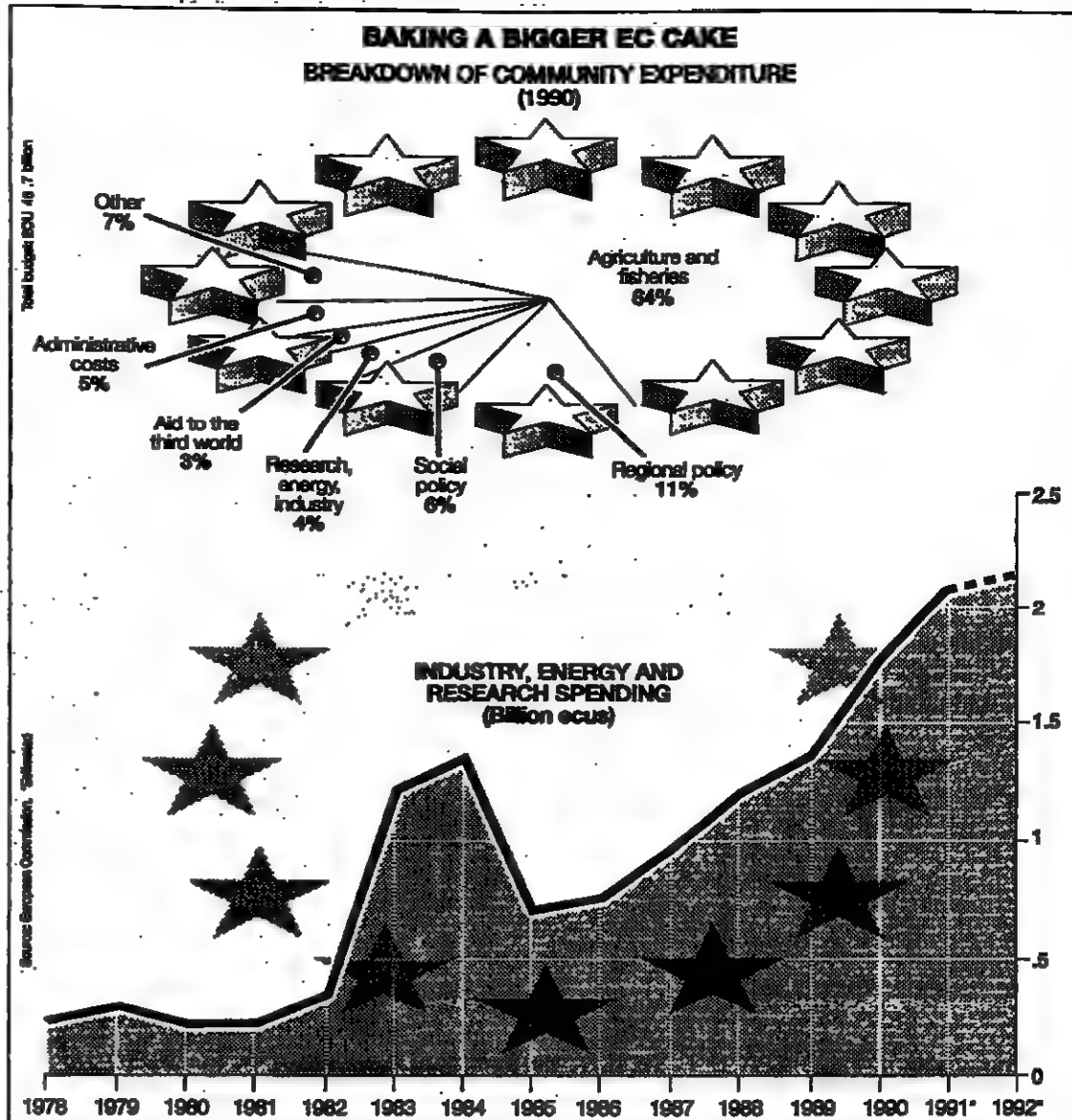
Britain and the Netherlands would have been happy to drop the clauses, but had settled for watering them down as far as possible. France had proposed, less than a week after Mrs Edith Cresson became prime minister last May, a version that would have licensed the EC commission to subsidise selected European firms of strategic importance and to create a European equivalent of America's legal weapons for bilateral trade warfare.

Pierce opposition from northern capitals and exhaustive redrafting blocked most of that protectionist danger, but John Major told the meeting at Maastricht that Britain would like the further insurance of having industrial questions decided by unanimity, preserving a national veto. Ruud Lubbers, the Dutch prime minister and summit chairman, then listed each other country in turn. All were in favour of majority voting. President Mitterrand of France was particularly scornful of Britain's attempt to defy the majority. Mr Major repeated his objection. Mr Lubbers promptly said that Mr Major's wish for unanimity would prevail. "That makes it completely safe," said one satisfied Dutch official last week.

The word socialism is not often heard in Brussels nowadays, and it certainly was not being used yesterday by John Smith and his Labour party colleagues when they called on various EC commissioners, just in case Labour has to handle Britain's scheduled presidency of the EC in the second half of the year. However, the EC is a cockpit where competing versions of capitalism now fight for supremacy and industrial policy questions never really go away.

The conditions in which the EC can hand out grants to industry are the key item on the commission's agenda today, as the Community's executive digs up details of an agenda and budget for the next five years.

The endless struggle to prevent governments slipping money to ailing industrial giants was also back in the headlines yesterday as the European Court of Justice delivered its final verdict on the "sweeteners" paid by the British government to British Aerospace to ease the sale of Rover — a judgment received with some annoyance by Sir Leon Brittan, the competition commissioner, who first spotted what he judged to be a hidden state subsidy. *Dirigistes* did not enjoy the Eight-



ies. The global fashion for deregulation, the lowering of trade barriers before the single market deadline at the end of this year and the muscular growth of the EC's own competition policy created a powerful liberalising thrust. However, loss of markets to Japanese competitors — particularly in the car and electronics industries — and the prospect of national protection in some member states having to be scaled down in

Pressures are renewed for measures to create new shelters for firms shivering in the winds of world competition

the single European market have renewed the pressures for pan-European measures to create new shelters for firms shivering in the winds of world competition. The recession in much of the Community has intensified that pressure.

Mrs Cresson's government has been trying to show Brussels the way by arranging marriages between large French corporations. The proposed merger between the loss-making electronics group Thomson and the profitable national nuclear ener-

gy giant will, says Alain Gomez, Thomson's head, "fill the gap left by neo-liberal theories" in Brussels.

The latest attempt to fill the gap has come from the subtle and relentless pen of Jacques Delors, the commission's president. Over the past few months, M Delors has floated some draft texts before his colleagues, which have suggested expanding and redirecting both the research and training budgets towards ensuring the "competitiveness" of European industry. In three years' time on present trends, there will be no European firms competing in some industries, M Delors said in an impassioned speech at Chateaux two weeks ago. "Is that what we must let happen? That is the battle in Europe," he added.

Like almost all of the commission's debates over economic philosophy, this duel is between M Delors and Sir Leon Brittan, the senior British commissioner. Sir Leon has pointed out that in the days of proliferating cross-border mergers, nobody can agree on what a "European firm" is in the first place. M Delors wishes to direct funds towards four sectors under threat from outside competition: cars, electronics, textiles and the conversion of defence industries. There is no dispute — nor is there likely to be much subsequent dispute among

governments — that research and training resources should be beefed up. The research budget will probably reach £3.5 billion by 1997. The argument is over the terms on which the money should be spent.

M Delors wants the EC to make an explicit commitment to helping the four endangered industries — a so-called "sectoral" approach, which EC ministers refused to take when they last looked at the issue

The commission is as keen to interfere in industry as any member government if the climate is propitious

towards the end of last year. M Delors' opponents at the end of last month included not only Sir Leon but, less predictably, a number of the commissioners from southern EC states who did not like the drift of the discussion.

The way that the rules for research and training grants are written will have a crucial effect for years on the directions in which the money flows. Commissioners Manuel Marin of Spain, Greece's Vasso Papandreou and Filippo Pandolfi of

Italy fear that guidelines will favour large northern companies with the lobbying power to make off with the largest grants. The meeting came to no conclusion and M Delors delivered a furious rebuke to those who seemed ready to leave Europe's strategic industries in the lurch.

Take a fashionable research topic in an ailing industry: the quest for the clean car engine. Some commission officials would like to see sizeable EC funds devoted to helping the quest to perfect "lean-burn" engines, which are more efficient and less polluting. This proposal sounds, on the surface, to be open to all comers in the Community. However, there are probably only ten car makers in Europe with the scientific resources to mount such research. Holding the juicy prospect of large grants comes close to "sectoral" aid to specifically targeted companies and economies. In practice, much of the money would go to Renault, Peugeot and Fiat, the three European car-makers that have fallen behind in clean engine research. Audi and Volkswagen, who are much further ahead, might not qualify for help but might also feel that their competitive edge was being attacked by subsidised rivals.

The abstract debates over budget figures and legal texts will continue for years. After the commission releases its outline budget and programme for 1993-7 on February 11, there will be longer annexes to follow and implementing directives after that. Battles over rival interpretations will continue. The advocates of open and equal competition, who just about have the upper hand at the moment, will continue to watch for attempts by the sector-busters to slip through operating aid to importing loss-makers.

One commission official said: "This is often the way that the rot has set in in the past. The real intention to subsidise has waited in later because a loosely drawn veil left the possibility open." Others think that the commission itself is as keen to interfere in industry as any member government if the climate is propitious.

While the recurrent debates are complex, they are also about a simple matter of economic philosophy. Is the EC a referee first and foremost, ensuring that the playing field of competition is kept level and open to the outside world? Or is the EC's principal responsibility to create an industrial power to compete against the world's other trade blocs?

The Community's governments and the Brussels commission lie across the fault line that divides these competing ideas. Which view will prevail is by no means yet a foregone conclusion. My bet would be that M Delors cannot sway enough support to alter significantly the free-market changes of the Eighties.

One commission official reflected yesterday: "He really does think that the Japanese are cleaning us out and he wants to do something about it, but in his heart of hearts he knows that he can't use the Community to prop up dinosaurs."

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Kelsey rows over to SNC

WHILE it will always be known for its jobbing links, Smith New Court is rapidly making a name for itself as a corporate finance house. After being appointed joint brokers last week with Rowe & Pitman to the flotation of MFI, probably the largest issue the market will see this year, the firm's corporate financiers have scored another coup by hiring Alan Kelsey, former head of research at Kicat & Aitken. Kelsey, aged 42, joins from RBC Dominion Securities where he set up and ran a corporate finance arm, and has strong links with transport companies from his days as an analyst, where he was top-rated in the sector for 13 years. He has found himself among many familiar faces from Kicat days, including Clive Anderson and Mark Laurence, both of whom cover the transport sector. "I led a rowing eight at Kicat and Clive was one of them," says Kelsey, "but he was a somewhat better oarsman."

Bad timing

The City Diary award for impeccable timing this week goes to John Olsen of Shandwick Consultants, the City PR company, who wrote to a colleague inviting him to lunch with Tony McCann, chief executive of Astra Holdings, the munitions company once linked to the Iraq supergun affair. "I imagine that you are fairly well aware of the Astra saga to date," he writes. "Tony is entertaining company, and 1992 should be the year when things at



"Now they all want sweeteners"

Astra start moving forward again." He was wrong. The company has gone into receivership with debts of £50 million.

Slippery partner

Fire-eater Leo Hudson, 40, has found that hiring a partner can help in the recession. Trade has hotted up to record levels since he began to wear Boris, a 7ft python, round his neck. Leo, from Derbyshire, is now able to charge £200 a show and is thinking of export work, provided the snake can slide through customs.

Friend of Romania

ORPHANS in Romania are about to get a powerful helping hand from the heart of the Square Mile. Philip Dayer, formerly of ANZ, Barclays de Zoete Wedd and Hill Samuel, has just been appointed head of corporate finance at Société Générale. And later this month, he takes on the role of treasurer

of the Romanian Orphanage Trust, run by George Young, former minister of defence and chairman of the Royal Bank of Scotland. Dayer, a chartered accountant, joined Hill Samuel in 1978 and spent six years there before joining BZW. At ANZ Grindlays he was head of corporate finance. The Romanian trust has raised more than £8 million since it was set up 18 months ago.

Have a nice sale

IN THEIR never-ending quest to woo shoppers back into their stores, British retailers may care to take a lesson from their counterparts in America. Take the following notice, spotted by a City Diary reader in a toy shop in San Francisco:

- 1 Please touch the merchandise.
- 2 Feel free to play with everything in the store (except the employees).
- 3 If you break it... relax, we know you didn't mean to.
- 4 Food and drinks allowed — enjoy!
- 5 No shoes, no shirt, no sweat.
- 6 Our toys carry a lifetime guarantee... the life of the toy, not yours.
- 7 All sales are final (more or less).
- 8 Most importantly, our employees have been instructed not to say "Have a nice day".

Samuel in port

THE Clyde Port Authority self-off has thrown up an alternative buyer. John Mather has already put in a management bid for the company, with its potentially valuable 450 square miles of riverside commercial space. But Bill

Samuel, the Glasgow entrepreneur, has also shown an interest. Although Samuel remains secretive about any involvement in Clyde Port his coyness is thought to be prompted by conditions laid down by the government. He was chairman of Motherwell Football Club, for four years in the Seventies, and built up a fortune through steel stock holding companies in Wishaw, Strathclyde — which he then sold to British Steel — and Regis & Regis, his adventurous property development company.

Plain sailing

SIMON Irwin, the top ranked oil analyst who left Kleinwort Benson in September to sail round the world, has adapted to life at sea remarkably well. Irwin, formerly a member of KB's all-stars team, who set off for the Canaries on White Gold II, a 36ft yacht, with the help of his friend James Woosnam, a computer consultant, has been tracked down to Curaçao in the Dutch Antilles where he has been living it up after a successful Atlantic crossing. The pair took part in the Atlantic Rally for Cruisers from the Canaries to St Lucia in the Caribbean and came in ninth out of 125 boats. They were also second in their class. "We even won the Outstanding Achievement award, though I don't know how," says Woosnam, who plans to push on through the Panama canal en route to Australia. "Far better than stockbroking," he adds. The pair hope to reach the Seychelles in the Indian Ocean by the autumn.

JON ASHWORTH

Catalogue of breakdowns

From Mr Raymond Worgan

Sir, My recent experience of high street rubbish substantiates Mrs Sanders' letter (January 31).

In the past few weeks

1. A new dishwasher flooded the kitchen at its first operation due to a broken pump.
2. A new toaster caught fire after three weeks. Its replacement lasted ten days.
3. A food processor burnt out after some 20 uses.
4. A major mail order company took three-and-a-half months to deliver the TV and video recorder of my choice. In that time, they delivered two wrong TVs and one wrong video, all of which they had to come and collect.

If trade and industry are grumbling about a recession, much of the problem is of their own making.

Yours faithfully,
RAYMOND WORGAN,
Milton Point, Yealm Road,
Newton Ferrers, Plymouth.

Modern practice?

From Mr Robert W. Tyler

Sir, The attitude of Lloyds Bank to their relationship with small companies and their admitted "unprofessional behaviour" in relation to the Forwell Group (February 3) must make the small businessman who uses their facilities feel that he should look elsewhere for future support.

Their apparent high-handed and uncaring attitude in the present business climate, as shown in Neil Bennett's report, appears to show an attitude of "I'm all right, Jack," we'll grab and let the employees and shareholders take the rap. Is this modern banking practice? Yours faithfully,
ROBERT W. TYLER,
8 Abbotsmeade Close,
Twickenham, Richmond.

Stamping feet in vain in the search for customer service

From Mr David H. Walton

Sir, I am told the recession is my fault for not spending.

I recently decided to buy an inexpensive pair of shoes, and in pursuit of this aim went to nine shoe shops. I chose times when the shops were not busy. Two shops I walked out of immediately as I objected to buying anything in a disco. In all the other shops, whether in Oxford Street or Peterborough shopping mall, I had the same experience. Totally uninterested staff who obviously had no knowledge of their stock, and even less knowledge of the product they were obviously not selling.

Their main object in life

seems to stand talking to each other. They seemed, to a person, to be unable to lace a man's shoe correctly, and not once was a shoe lift volunteered before it was requested.

It is apparent the directors of these companies get their shoes from bespoke lasts and only visit their own shops in company of a phalanx of protectors.

Whilst the shoe shops were my worst experience, similar experiences are found in other shops.

Yours truly,
DAVID WALTON,
10 St Guthlac's Close,
Crowland,
Lincolnshire.

Problems with the rented market

From Mr T.F. Powys-Lybbe

Sir, I must protest strongly at Mr Neville Lee's assertion (January 31) that mortgage tax relief should be phased out and the saving given to the rented market, thus equalising the tax benefit and giving a real choice between buying and renting.

He has obviously forgotten that owners of commercial property can charge 100 per cent of the interest that they pay on however much they borrow against their tax bill. Commercial property has been grossly subsidised by this means for decades now, compared with owner-occupied property.

ble times have shown to be a false method of operation.

Yours faithfully,
TIMOTHY
POWYS-LYBBE,
Rosewood, Church Road,
Winkfield, Windsor,
Berkshire.

Letters to The Times Business and Finance section can be sent by fax on 071-782 5112.

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No	Company	Group	Cash or Div
1	Wood John D	Property	
2	ICI	Chemicals	
3	FR Group	Media/Print	
4	Waddington (I)	Paper/Print	
5	Lloyds Chem	Drugs/Pharm	
6	BET Oil	Industrial	
7	Thames Water	Water	
8	Johnnie Press	Newspaper/Print	
9	Providence	Banking	
10	Nitin Foods	Food	
11	Hayward Wm	Building/Rd	
12	Slough Estates	Property	
13	Meyer Ltd	Building/Rd	
14	Anglian Water	Water	
15	Wessex Water	Water	
16	NFC	Transport	
17	Quatro	Paper/Print	
18	Tarmac	Building/Rd	
19	Gold Green	Paper/Print	
20	Dag Motors	Motor/Veh	
21	Delta	Electrical	
22	Hedger	Drugs/Pharm	
23	Wicks Water	Water	
24	Macdonald	Industrial	
25	Building	Building/Rd	
26	Stn Gp	Industrial	
27	Sims Water	Water	
28	Security Serv	Industrial	
29	North Wes	Water	
30	Bellway	Building/Rd	
31	Time Product	Drugs/Pharm	
32	Laing (I)	Building/Rd	
33	AB Food	Food	
34	Alair Drugs	Industrial	
35	Sono Gp	Industrial	
36	Wace	Paper/Print	
37	Carlton Corus	Leisure	
38	Manover-Sw	Electrical	
39	MEPC	Property	
40	Wilson (I)	Building/Rd	
41	Bentley	Drugs/Pharm	
42	Carles	Banking	
43	Land Soc	Property	
44	Mind	Electrical	

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Please take into account any minor signs

Weekly Dividend

Please make a note of your daily share price for the weekly dividend of £4,000 to Saturday's newspaper.

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There were no valid claims for the Portfolio Platinum prize yesterday. The £4,000 will be added to today's competition.

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Equities mark time

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings began January 27. Dealings end Friday. Settlement day February 10. Settlement day February 17. Forward bargains are permitted on two previous business days. Prices are in pence. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

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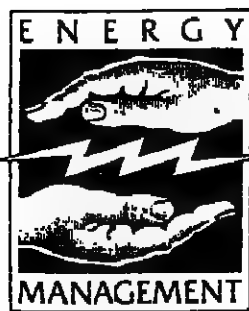
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Fully briefed to operate in a master class

Employers are having a say in Master of Business Administration courses. Michel Syrett explains

Anyone wishing to study for a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree cannot complain about lack of choice. The world's most popular general business qualification, the MBA is recognised in most developed countries and is seen by a growing number of managers as a passport to higher pay and better career prospects.

The number of institutions offering MBAs in Britain has nearly doubled since 1985, from 47 to more than 80. There is no longer a "standard" MBA programme. European schools have been striving to narrow the disparity between the 70,000 MBA graduates produced every year in the United States from over 700 business schools and the 10,000 MBAs produced by schools elsewhere in the world. In the process, employers have been given a greater say in the content and design of programmes — a lead North American schools are likely to follow.

Business schools and their sponsoring organisations are united in thinking that the theory taught on MBA programmes will only benefit students if they can place it in the context of their work. Most schools now require candidates to have at least three years' work experience. Students are older, typically in their late twenties or early thirties, returning to post-graduate study in mid-career.

One consequence has been the huge rise in the number of part-time and distance learning courses, which enable managers to study for an MBA without leaving their jobs. In Britain, the popularity of this kind of programme has been marked. While the number of managers study-

ing for full-time MBAs rose by just under a fifth in 1990, the increase was 37 per cent in part-time courses and 43 per cent in distance learning programmes.

But the changes do not stop there. During the last ten years, companies invested more resources in management development. They became sophisticated users of the services provided by management education specialists and started to question whether business schools were producing the right kind of manager.

Their criticisms were reflected in a 1990 report

Companies are questioning whether schools are producing good managers

published by America's influential Graduate Management Admission Council, which applies equally to many European schools. The report suggested that the curricula of business schools were not keeping up with changes in the business environment and lambasted institutions for constructing "elegant, abstract models that seek to unify the world economic system" rather than "frameworks to help students understand the messy, concrete reality of international business".

On both sides of the Atlantic, business schools have responded to the new agenda set by their customers. Wharton School in Pennsylvania,

Columbia in New York and the London Business School have all recently redesigned the content of their full-time and part-time programmes, placing more emphasis on current business issues such as globalisation, managing quality, business ethics and managing change.

But European schools, particularly those in Britain, have gone further in allowing their client organisations to be directly involved in the running of their programmes. At Ashridge Management College in Hertfordshire participants are asked to undertake a project directly linked to the strategic aims of their sponsoring company, such as a new product launch setting up a new business or reviewing a manufacturing process.

Whereas MBA programmes such as Harvard's base their teaching methods on discussion and interaction between students on the programme. In the UK the Ashridge MBA puts more emphasis on the "learning partnership" formed between the individual, the sponsoring company and the tutor. Students are supported by in-company mentors who work with Ashridge tutors to monitor the individual's progress.

A similar approach is taken in the MBA programme offered by the newly launched Judge Institute at Cambridge University. The Cambridge MBA mixes on-campus tuition with work carried out on the company's premises. All participants must be sponsored and spend a lot of time in the workplace.

However, many European and American academics oppose company-based MBAs, tailored to the needs of a particular organisation. Professor Errol Alexander, the



Blast-off: Professor Errol Alexander, formerly a manager on the Apollo moon landing and now director of Stirling University's MBA, pictured with his students

director of the Stirling University MBA, says: "They are oxymoronic, which means you are taking two things and creating a third that represents nothing: it is like a horse designed by a committee."

Opportunities go on show

For two days
Islington is the
place to shop for a
business course



TOMORROW and on Friday the Business Design Centre at Islington, north London, opens its doors for the MBA Fair.

Anne-Marie Martin writes

The fair is one of the most ambitious events of its kind, aimed at anyone interested in studying for a Master of Business Administration degree. Organised by the University of London Careers Advisory Service and the Association of MBAs and sponsored by The Times, the fair provides an opportunity to compare the diversity of MBA degrees provided by business schools around the world. More than 1,700 people visited the first fair last year, and the organisers expect this year's attendance to reach 3,000.

Some of Britain's and Europe's best business schools will be exhibiting, including London Business School, Cranfield School of Management, the Open University, Insead in France, SDA Bocconi in Italy, and IESE in Spain.

The fair is also notable this year for the number of US business schools attending, including North Eastern University, Stern School of Business in New York, and Georgetown University.

For those who know nothing about business qualifications, the fair provides a useful in-

roduction to the range of courses available. Those who have already researched the preliminaries but are keen to delve more deeply into the differences between programmes will be able to pose questions in person to admission tutors and academics.

The fair will be supported by a range of advisers and career counsellors. The MBA graduate management admission test (GMAT) advice centre will discuss the importance of the GMAT exam and offer advice on its successful completion. Visitors interested in US programmes will be able to consult the Fulbright Commission's Educational Advisory Service, experts in American post-graduate study.

The University of London's career advisers will be available on both days, counselling participants on how they can present themselves well on paper and in face-to-face interviews.

There is also a comprehensive programme of seminars covering every aspect of management education. Brian Seftoe, the director of the University of London Careers Advisory Service, argues that the people who will benefit most from the fair are managers who have three years' work experience.

Details: MBA Fair, Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, London N1 (Free hotline: 0800 252183). To get the best from the fair it is worth buying a copy of the catalogue (price £1.50) available at the door



International M.B.A. Programme In Madrid, Spain

Representatives from the Instituto de Empresa will be present at THE MBA FAIR, 6 & 7 February 1992 at the Business Design Centre. Our stand location is V10.

V25	V24	V9	V8
V26	V23	V7	
V27	V22	V11	V6
V28	V21	V12	V5
V29	V20	V13	V4
V30	V19	V14	V3
V31	V18	V15	V2
V32	V17	V16	V1

Course Outline

The International MBA is an intensive Spanish-English bilingual programme, in which the participants, after having completed twelve months of course work and a 3-4 month management internship with public or private firms, are incorporated into key positions in multinational or leading industrial companies.

The programme includes courses using the case method, lectures and seminars, visits to companies and institutions relevant to the business field, and the completion of a Business Plan for creating a new business.

Participant Profile

Candidates of any nationality may attend the programme upon successful completion of a rigorous selection process and having demonstrated leadership skills. Latin-American and Philippino candidates may apply for grants awarded by El Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana. The average age of those taking part is 26-27 years old and they normally have one to three years work experience and top degrees from leading universities.

The Instituto de Empresa

The Instituto de Empresa is a private independent institution founded in 1973 for the purpose of teaching Business Administration and Top Management training programs. Its academic staff is composed of 49 full-time, 23 associates, 118 part-time and 32 visiting professors.

The Instituto de Empresa is centrally located in Madrid, Spain, and housed in five large villas (9,000 sq. m.) set in spacious garden surroundings.

Further information should be requested from:

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Nijenrode The Netherlands School of Business

Booth V.29 MBA Fair in London 6 and 7 February

Which course in schools maze?

MBA programmes come in many shapes and sizes, and there is no formal agreement on what makes up an MBA course. However, there is consensus about the minimum that should be included: accounting, finance, human resource management, marketing, organisational behaviour, economics, quantitative methods, information management and probably some computer training.

This is regarded as a core programme and is usually compulsory. Although some schools allow students to omit some courses, usually after a test. In addition, programmes may offer elective, or optional, courses that can be grouped into a specialisation or spread across a range of subjects. These are more common in two-year programmes, though some one-year MBAs offer them, too.

The full-time, two-year programme is the classic MBA and is the norm in the United States. One or two European schools, such as IESE in Barcelona, the London Business School and Rotterdam School of Management, also follow this model. The total time spent on campus is usually

The choice of MBA programme is tricky. George Bickerstaffe offers a guiding hand

between 18 and 21 months, with the first year spent studying core courses and the second studying optional courses.

Most students use the summer months to work in a company, known in the US as an internship, and schools usually help students to find such jobs. There is no obligation to do a summer job — students may go on holiday if they wish — but an internship offers experience and perhaps job opportunities, as well as money.

The one-year, full-time programme is almost as standard in Europe as the two-year programme is in the US. Although described as one year, they can vary from ten months (at Insead, Fontainebleau and IMD, Lausanne) to about 15 (at SDA Bocconi in Milan).

These courses may consist entirely of compulsory core courses

or may include options. They are intensive and, some argue, do not cover subjects in as much depth as longer programmes. However, the workload can be much heavier. Many programmes also include an in-company consultancy project that may lead to a dissertation, essential to granting a master's degree at some schools.

Part-time programmes take place either in the evenings or at weekends. Some residential blocks, usually of a week, are often included. Generally these courses follow the same programme as the full-time version; students simply take longer to finish the programme, usually two or three years.

Studying part-time is a considerable chore, since it must be combined with an often demanding job. One student who recently graduated from London Business School's part-time MBA course says: "I would recommend anyone to do an MBA, but with a serious government health warning about doing it part-time."

Whatever the type of MBA programme a student chooses, he or she can be sure that it will mean extremely hard work, designed to reflect the real pressures of working life. There is also an



Tough at the top: a student works out in the London Business School's gym.

enormous volume of knowledge students are expected to absorb.

Schools vary tremendously in size. Insead, for example, takes in 450 students a year (in two equal intakes) and is planning to increase this. Students are put into class groups of about 60 or 70. At IMD, by contrast, the total annual

intake is only between 60 and 80 students. Schools in the UK are generally somewhere between these two. Most US schools are much bigger. Harvard, for example, enrolls 1,600 students a year.

Women remain in a minority on MBA programmes. Elizabeth McCormick, director of MBA admis-

sions at IESE in Barcelona, says that women make up about 20 per cent of applicants and students.

George Bickerstaffe is author of *Which MBA? A Critical Guide to the World's Best Programmes*, published by the Economist Intelligence Unit.

Help for the loan rangers

THE Association of MBAs has run a business school loan scheme for students since 1969. The scheme is open to full or part-time students (but not to distance learning students) and is administered by the association on behalf of Barclays and the National Westminster banks.

The terms, which are generous, must represent a significant cost to the lenders. Meurig Hughes of Barclays describes it as a loss leader, and last year the two other major clearing banks left the scheme.

Both banks offer a maximum repayment period of seven years, starting three months after completion of the course. Repayment is at 2.5 per cent above base rate. Barclays charges an interest rate of 6 per cent below base rate during the course, and for three months afterwards. The National Westminster charges 4 per cent below base rate during the course and for a year afterwards.

To be eligible you must have a place on a master's course on the association's approved list. The association also requires a minimum of two years' work experience and a first degree, although certain professional qualifications, such as in chartered accountancy, may be considered. Otherwise the minimum work experience is five years.

The maximum loan generally available to full-time students is two-thirds of present or last salary (plus tuition fees) for each year of study.

The decision to apply for a loan should not be taken lightly. Anne Kieley of Barclays Bank always warns applicants that they will see a decline in their standard of living almost immediately. "It is an enormous commitment, almost like taking out another mortgage," she says.

Barclays puts no ceiling on overseas loans but the amounts can be significant. Fees for the first year of a programme at Wharton, for example, one of the leading US business schools, are \$17,750 (just under £10,000) and double this at Insead in France, although the course is shorter.

For many, the only way to afford to go on an MBA programme is by taking advantage of the loan scheme.

The job world is no oyster

An MBA alone is not enough to open the corporate door, Clare Hogg reports

hundreds of applications for each vacancy from people of the same standard. It would be a mistake now to do an MBA in order to make a career change.

Richard Boggis-Rolfe, the managing director of NB Selection, agrees that the premium now is paid for real experience and not for qualifications. "What is more," he says, "an MBA will never make a poor candidate a good one, or even look like a good one. Nor should it ever be seen as a panacea."

"However, in today's market, an MBA is something which may help to distinguish one candidate from another. You have to remember that there will always be some employers who will positively discriminate against MBAs — they

think they smelt too much of the academic rather than the commercial approach. On the other hand, in my business, for example, where there are no professional qualifications, an MBA is an advantage."

Mr Boggis-Rolfe says that from a job-hunting point of view the selection of the business school is as important as the qualification itself. Employers distinguish between schools with good and bad reputations; so do the students. A lot of the value of going to business school is in the network of

opportunities it affords: the better schools offer a means of introduction to better future contacts.

Leo Murray, the director of Cranfield School of Management, agrees that the competition for MBA standard jobs has increased exponentially, and says that this is not purely because of the recession. "There has been a proliferation over the last five years of business schools of variable quality, so there are many more people in the job market with an MBA qualification," he says. "In addition, the demise of the middle

management stratum in many organisations is leading to the MBA graduate having to compete with a flood of older, more experienced candidates."

Professor Murray does not necessarily see these changes as all bad. They do mean, he says, that "MBAs are having to work harder at focusing and directing their efforts. They cannot just sit back and wait for offers to come flooding in." He believes that the quality schools are still finding placements for their students: of Cranfield's September 1991 output, 80 per cent have jobs.

"Both the school and the students are having to become much more professional in their approach," he explains. Cranfield

has just produced a new placements guide for recruiters. It is bringing in external counsellors to advise students.

The school also works closely with its partners on the Continent. More than half the British-based MBA graduates on their joint programme with Lyons University have found jobs in France.

Professor Murray and Ms Langley May both say the profile of available jobs has changed. Finance and consulting, traditionally the biggest employers of MBAs, are now giving way to information technology and manufacturing. Insead's figures bear this out. Last year, 14 per cent more students went into industry than in the previous year.

At the very least, Professor Murray says, the recent developments in the job market may "help to rectify the reputation for arrogance from which MBA graduates suffer".

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Arm's length study

Clare Hogg reports on the advantages of distance learning

There are now more enrolments in distance learning MBAs than in any other kind of MBA course. Distance learning is suitable for a wide range of people. It provides an obvious alternative for those who are loath to give up full-time employment, as it does for those who do not live near a business school.

Morag Batchelor, a student at Henley Management College, says: "It's a useful way to study. You can integrate it into your job. You can take the modules in the order which is most beneficial."

For those who cannot commit themselves to regular study times, the distance learning MBA is really the only possibility, and this means that many students tend to be highly mobile, and many are expatriates.

Stephanie Stray, an academic director at Warwick University, explains that there is another advantage to distance learning. "As people go through a course they can actually apply it — they get a better idea of the application of the material," she says.

The three largest providers of distance learning programmes are the Open University, Henley Management College and Warwick University, but of the three the Open University has made the biggest impact on the market. It accounts for about an eighth of all new enrolments, and more than a third of those enrolling for distance learning, an impressive achievement for a school which launched its course only three years ago. The minimum age is 27 and graduates can take an accelerated route.

It is not surprising that the programme is popular: it has an innovative content, devised largely by the Open Business School dean, Andrew Thomson.

The programme, which costs £5,700, is composed of two base courses: the competent manager, which takes up to 440 hours, the equivalent of a full university year, and the strategic manager, which takes 220 hours. After that

the student may choose one of nine other courses.

The programme provided by Henley has international appeal. Of Henley's 6,000 students only about half are based in Britain. Over a decade ago the school started looking for partners abroad, initially in the Far East, and then in Europe. The latest bulk order comes from The University of the German Armed Forces.

In March 1990, the first intake was mostly from the air force, but the course is now available to commercial students from big German employers like Siemens and Daimler-Benz.

The Henley programme costs £5,950, takes three years and requires an average of ten hours' work a week. A two-year intensive option is also available.

The course at Warwick can take longer. Three to four years is the average, eight years is the maximum. All

students must attend an eight-day seminar each September.

Warwick is unusual in that it has only one MBA course for all its students, so it is possible to begin the course as a full-time student, and change to part-time or distance learning, or any combination. The total distance learning course of 12 units and a written project costs £5,590.

Distance learning MBA courses are available from: Aston University (021-359 3611); Henley Management College (0491 571 454); Oxford Polytechnic (0865 755763); Warwick University (0203 523 523); Durham University (091-374 2211); Herriot-Watt University (031-449 5111); Stirling University (0786 73171); The Open University (0908 274066). In addition, open learning courses (a combination of part-time and distance learning) are available from: Bristol Polytechnic, Napier Polytechnic, Trent Polytechnic, Kingston Polytechnic, and Strathclyde University.



Bookworm: Morag Batchelor studies from home

Tailored may not be best

In-company MBAs have little value elsewhere, says Marion Devine

Although most managers are still funding themselves through MBA courses, a small number are being given an opportunity to embark on company-based MBAs. While these qualifications offer valuable benefits, managers should be aware that in-company MBAs are not always valued so highly as open MBAs.

Some tailored MBAs are criticised for their quality and range and in a small number of cases have failed to win proper validation. If this is the case, the MBA is virtually worthless outside the manager's company.

The introduction of company-based qualifications initially provoked controversy, even hostility, among businesses and academic institutions. Opponents argued that these qualifications lacked the same academic rigour, weight and breadth as traditional MBA courses. Supporters of in-company MBAs argued that schools were simply being territorial and arrogant, rejecting an approach that forced them to work with businesses in a more equal

partnership to create flexible and relevant work-based qualifications.

Since then, criticism of tailored qualifications has become more qualified. In particular, consortium-based company MBAs, offered by such institutions as Warwick University and City University Business School, have now gained widespread acceptance and respect. These programmes are seen to overcome the problem of narrowness and insularity endemic in most tailored courses because they enable managers from diverse businesses to mix together.

Single-company MBAs continue to attract fierce opposition, however, not just from business schools but also from managers themselves. In a survey of 633 managers holding MBAs, for example, the British Institute of Management (BIM) discovered that a large majority of managers disapproved of tailored MBAs. Only one quarter of the respondents were at all complimentary about in-company MBAs and most of these had some reservations, the BIM reported.

In future, managers may well change their minds about tailored MBAs if businesses are more successful in offering learning opportunities that clearly outweigh those offered by open courses. Standard Chartered Bank could provide the model.

The bank is blazing the

trail by its ambitious attempt to run an international MBA programme for 18 of its middle managers, operating in 13 different countries. In conjunction with Henley Management College, the bank has grouped the MBA managers into three informal regional support groups, based in Britain, Africa and the Middle East, and the Asia/Pacific region. Managers have been supplied with notebook computers and

modems to communicate with each other and their Henley tutors through closed networks.

In addition to their regional meetings, they will all meet together formally for an annual residential period. This year's location may well be Singapore.

Faced with the tantalising prospect of notebook computers, state-of-the-art networking and an annual training event somewhere in the world, how many managers could fail to throw away their business school prospectuses and sign up for a company MBA on the spot?

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Careers spoilt by choice

Be sure to pick the right school, writes George Bickerstaffe

Increasingly, there is one thing to be said about an MBA degree: it does not matter that you have one; what counts is where you got it.

The United States produces at least 70,000 MBA graduates a year and the rest of the world perhaps another 10,000, so the MBA degree is not as exclusive as it once was. The problem is that this growth is being followed by the top schools, in the US or in Europe. The British market is fragmented, with the top five schools having 20 per cent of the students between them.

Anyone considering an MBA must try to get into the best school possible. But which are the best schools and how can prospective students sort out the wheat from the chaff? Answering that question is difficult in Britain because there are now more than 80 institutions, many offering several varieties of MBA programmes.

One way to give students and recruiters some guide to quality in the jungle of competing programmes and schools would be a system of accreditation requiring cer-



tain minimum standards. Proposals for such a scheme have been made in Europe, without any real progress made. Most of the bigger (and better) schools argue that accreditation would mean lower standards.

Seven factors should be taken into account when choosing a school: programme content; size and culture; facilities; faculty; location; internationalism; and published surveys, and rankings. Prospective students should try to make an assessment on each criterion. The first three are covered elsewhere in this report; as are cost and financing, other important factors. Any business school is only

as good as its teaching faculty, and good faculties are in short supply. Doctoral programmes, which are the main source of new teachers, cannot keep up with the boom in management education.

It is important to choose a business school that is appropriate to you and your aspirations, not just one that comes top in all the surveys. The same applies to internationalism, the current buzz word in business school circles. Most schools claim to be international, but is that what you want? If you are determined to stay put in a non-international job, then a leading regional or national school would be just as good.

Getting into a top business school is not easy. Applications outnumber places and most schools pride themselves on their selectivity. Applying to a business school is rather like a two-way beauty contest. Both applicant and school are looking for the best. As such, it is a fraught process.

The admission procedure is fairly standardised and is usually based on a daunting application form. Apart from personal details, the form is likely to seek academic and work records and references, plus two or three short essay questions designed to elicit something of the applicant's personality and attitudes (generally the most difficult part of the form). Some

schools also require a personal interview.

Many schools demand proficiency in mathematics, especially calculus, and objective tests of fluency in English for non-native speakers. The Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) — a three-and-a-half hour test of verbal and quantitative reasoning — is increasingly a prerequisite of admission.

Every US school, except Harvard, requires it and so do most European schools. Several schools insist on a minimum score on the test, and top schools will not accept a score below 550-600. The test takes place four times a year, in January, March, June and October in centres around the world.

Even a good application form and high GMAT score do not guarantee a place. Business schools are paying increasingly close attention to personality and previous work experience, because experienced managers in the classroom significantly enrich both the teaching and learning experiences.

One final point: it is wise to submit applications well ahead of the deadline set by schools. Practices vary, but you should assume that schools begin filling their class lists from the moment they start to receive applications. It is not unusual for top schools to have filled their lists well ahead of deadlines.

Brash image changes

Ask a cross-section of people how they would describe a person with an MBA — assuming they know what it is — and an unflattering picture emerges.

"Brash" is the comment of Anne Dickson, a records management consultant. "Arrogant" is how Antoinette Pirie, a registrar in public health, sees them. "MBAs talk in jargon," says Liz Kelly, who runs her own company.

Typically, an Eighties MBA is seen as an ambitious member of an elite business club, and male. But the image is changing. The MBA's sex, for a start. Ten years ago, virtually no women in Britain were doing a business management degree. This year more than a quarter of graduates will be female.

However, the MBA is no longer the golden key to a glittering business career. In today's tough market it will not even guarantee you an interview, even less a job.

The MBA used to be ascribed magical properties. Not only would it set the graduate on the fast-track promotion ladder but it could transform the most unpromising material.

Ms Kelly, who set up The Pretty Young Company, an environmentally-friendly nappy concern, after doing an MBA course at Strathclyde University, says people should have more realistic expectations. "Having an MBA won't change your personality or turn an engineer into a merchant banker," she says. "Some students would benefit more from a course on interpersonal relationships."

Ms Pirie, who trained as an obstetrician, agrees that an MBA builds on existing skills. "It's difficult to change career directions completely," she says. "Most people move back into the area that they knew before. I wanted to combine my medical experience with a management role, and I am now working on a purchasing team within the NHS."

Why do people take a year or two out of their lives, and a lot out of their bank account, to do an MBA, and do they get their money's worth? Joanne Reardon, coming from an arts background and a theatre administration job, was looking for a change of career direction. At Aston University in Birmingham she found her fellow students were engineers, bankers and accountants.

The financial side of the programme was tough, but she shone in marketing studies. She now finances her writing career by freelance public relations work in the medical field. "Strategic management has taught me discipline and how to orga-

nise my thoughts, which is useful when planning a play," she says.

Does an MBA qualification change your life? Without it, Joanne Reardon thinks she would still be in theatre management on a low salary. Liz Kelly might have a safe job and a pension; and Antoinette Pirie would probably be doing clinical medicine.

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Global vision of future

Michel Syrett on the importance of internationalising MBA courses

Top business schools around the world are stepping up efforts to make their MBA programmes more international to meet the needs of their increasingly multinational clients.

European schools have traditionally led the way. The two schools seen as genuinely international are IMD in Lausanne, Switzerland, and Insead at Fontainebleau in France, which was founded in 1958 in the wake of the Treaty of Rome to serve an emerging pan-European business community.

Insead's 80 permanent teaching staff reflect its international perspective. They come from Europe, North America, Turkey, India, Tunisia, South Korea, Israel, Egypt and New Zealand. A similar mix of nationalities is found among the students. This year and last, 460 students from 41 countries were

admitted to the MBA programme.

IMD has a similar spread of nationalities among its teaching staff and students. Formed in 1990 from a merger of two independent schools in Switzerland, it has a reputation built on the quality of its courses for senior executives rather than graduates. This is now changing. Last year IMD decided to increase its MBA numbers from 65 in 1992 to 120 in 1993.

Other European business schools are closing the gap. London Business School is seen by many employers as in the same league as Insead and IMD: 60 per cent of its MBA students come from overseas and the programme has been redesigned to emphasise international management. Foreign visits will play a key role in tuition.

Cranfield School of Management has greatly in-



On course: students at Insead, set up in 1958 to serve an emerging pan-European business community

creased its international standing by setting up a joint MBA programme with the French business school Groupe ESC Lyon. This enables bilingual students to study at both schools and to receive the MBAs of both universities. SDA Bocconi, the leading Italian school, offers a bilingual MBA programme and a Masters course in international economics and management to prepare young managers for international careers.

Until recently, US schools were seen as somewhat parochial in their outlook. Geoffrey Heal, vice-dean of the

Graduate Business School at Columbia University, New York, says: "Globalisation has become a big issue in the United States. Outside the activities of the major multinationals, our managers know very little about identifying overseas markets and collaborating with foreign partners."

Columbia made globalisation a priority when it redesigned its MBA programme last year. Every core course is now taught from an international perspective.

Harvard Business School has not sat on its laurels either. More than a quarter of

its 1,600 MBA students come from other countries and, like Columbia and counterparts in Europe, the school is researching new international case study material: discussion of case studies lies at the heart of Harvard's distinctive style of teaching.

Now that countries from the Pacific rim form an increasingly important economic block, business schools on both sides of the Atlantic are investing more resources in teaching materials and field visits that offer insights into the business strategies of Japanese, Korean and South-East Asian companies.

MBA students of Insead benefit from the work of its Euro Asia Centre, set up on campus in 1980, which offers research and management education to a network of more than 100 companies.

Western managers' interest in Asia has also benefited the University of Hong Kong's business school, which has been running a three-year part-time MBA course since 1976. Po Chung, chairman of DHL Hong Kong, and Simon Murray, managing director of Hutchinson, recently visited the university and enjoyed being interrogated by well-briefed students.



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Application forms are also available from: The Registrar, Admissions Office, University College of Wales, Old College, King Street, Aberystwyth, Dyfed, SY23 2AX.

Fit to fight the trade war

As business gets tougher, so the need for qualifications grows

their companies, while others commit themselves to spending up to £18,000 to become qualified.

One way to assess a management school is to examine its relationship with industry, a test passed with ease by Southampton University, which has one of the highest industrial funding ratios in the UK.

Michael Northcott, a deputy director, who moved to Southampton from ICI, insists that MBA courses are essential to improve the com-

petitiveness of British managers. The Southampton management school, which works closely with IBM, offers a choice of programmes aimed at meeting students' specific needs.

Wolverhampton Polytechnic business school has a close relationship with British Gas and Birmingham City Council. The polytechnic offers credits towards business qualifications against in-house company training, and has fully validated, customised courses leading to certificates,

diplomas and MBAs. Next month it will use its modular certificate scheme to provide access for Russian managers to a structured management development programme.

At Stirling University, Errol D. Alexander, who directs the international MBA programme, considers the course he oversees to be the toughest in Britain. "We have students who have been accepted at other internationally recognised business schools, who have chosen to come here instead because they know of our world-class commitment."

Although many of the less-known business schools will prosper through quality,

innovation and effort, Mr McCormick believes there may be too many and argues the need for fewer, better resourced establishments.

The big players, Manchester Business School, London Business School, Ashridge, Henley, Cranfield, Warwick and others need not fear a repetition of the American experience, though others may need to assess trends. Ray Wild, principal of Henley Management College, says: "This is perhaps the most diverse market in the educational world. Trying to satisfy too many needs, or not being clear about which are to be pursued, are the most common causes of mediocrity. It is essential that all parties know who is doing what and for whom."

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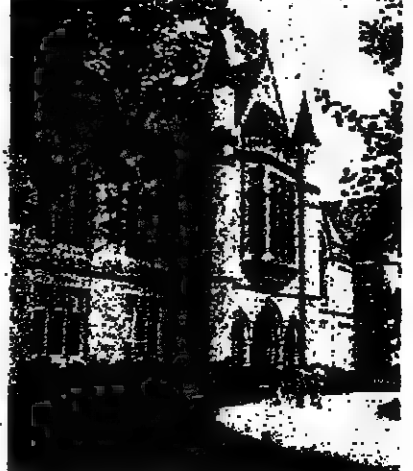
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Management resisting temptation to experiment as England pursue clean sweep in series

Case can be made for Botham to win his 100th cap

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN WELLINGTON

AS A sanctuary for the outcasted, Wellington's Basin Reserve is up there with the best. Stalemate is invariably provided to order. And yet, such is the disparity between the strengths and spirits of England and New Zealand, a draw in the final Test match, which starts here tomorrow, would be greeted with considerable surprise.

The weather, of course, may dictate matters. It often does in New Zealand's Windy City, and last night's forecast was distinctly unpromising. Given five fine days, however, England could well complete their first clean sweep of any overseas series since the 3-0 win in this country 29 years ago, when led by Ted Dexter, now chairman of the England committee, who arrived here yesterday.

Graham Gooch's comments on his own future have caused quite a stir here, despite being far more the speculation of a weary man than any specific declaration of intended retirement. He may play no further Tests after the series with Pakistan this summer but, then again, he could return, even as captain, against Australia in 1993.

Certainly, he has the backing of his team manager, Micky Stewart, to carry on as

long as he feels capable, not least because Stewart himself is preparing to step aside when his contract expires in September.

"I feel I will have done my stint by then," he said yesterday. "It has taken longer than I had hoped it might to reach the stage we are at now, but there is only a certain amount of time you can stay in this type of job. But I do hope Graham's influence lasts as long as possible. He still enjoys it, but he won't do it a minute longer if he thinks the time has come when he is no longer doing his job."

Despite declaring a free day yesterday for those who played in Auckland, Gooch reported to the Basin Reserve for his habitual batting session. He then examined the Test pitch with Stewart, who reported it as "drier and less grassy than Eden Park".

There have been only two positive results in the last ten Tests here, and New Zealand have not lost at the Basin since 1968. Wes Armstrong, the head groundsman, said yesterday that the pitch might offer the faster bowlers a little assistance on the opening day but would thereafter be "a batting strip".

This will come as a relief to Graeme Hick, another who

traded in his day off for a long net. Hick has not managed so much as a half-century in his first ten Test innings and remains disappointingly susceptible on the back foot.

"He has done a lot of work and, although the scores have not come yet, we are not worried about it and I don't think he is," Stewart said.

The same might not necessarily apply to the 100th Test match appearance of Ian Botham. Breaking back into the Test team will get no easier for him after this tour but, although he is essentially here for the World Cup, there may be a case for giving him the momentous cap in this match, possibly ahead of Derek Pringle.

A Wellington Test presents unique problems in that the wind, which is seldom far short of gale-force, invariably blows from end to end. There is no value in asking DeFreitas, Lewis or Lawrence to toil into the wind but Reeve could be useful upwind, as could Botham.

To select Botham would be a risk, as he has played only one game since September, and did not bat in that one. He will definitely not be chosen simply to prepare him for the World Cup. As Gooch rightly insists: "Playing in a Test match is a great honour and I am not about to leave someone out just to give someone else practice."

Last night, however, it remained conceivable that Gooch and Stewart would regard Botham as belonging in their best team for this occasion. As Stewart said: "He is as ready as he can be without much cricket. He is championing at the bit."

New Zealand, whose reaction to defeat in the first Test verged on panic, have been more stoical about losing the second. Their only change is to recall Ian Smith, who can be thought fortunate to be given preference over Adam Parore.

Martin Crowe enters the match carrying injuries and with his leadership qualities widely questioned. He will be comforted by playing on his home ground where, in 12 Test innings, he has five times passed 100.



Making his point: Moody completed a century on his recall to the Test side

Wellington's pitch offers little pace

AN EARTHQUAKE, torrential rain, gale force winds, two stumps split by the same ball and a fast bowler fainting have all, in their time, interrupted play during a Test match at Wellington (Simon Wilde writes). Going by the usual pace of proceedings at the Basin Reserve, each must have come as a merciful relief.

It is nine years since there was last a positive Test result there and, on the puddings that pass for pitches there, any quality batsman with patience can make a score. Martin Crowe has made a century in each of his last four Tests on the ground and on New Zealand's last two visits New

Zealand have had no trouble denying them with totals of 537 in 1983-4 and 512 for six declared four years ago.

England must beware complacency. Chasing 137 to win yesterday, they collapsed for a mere 64. Being their first defeat by New Zealand in 48 Tests, it was rather appropriate that England should meet their Waterloo on the playing fields of Wellington.

RESULTS (1983-84 to date): England won 2, New Zealand 1, drawn 3. HIGHEST TOTALS: England 488 (1983-84); 537 (1983-84). LOWEST TOTALS: 64 (1977-78); 128 (1977-78). HIGHEST INNIINGS: 198 (D W Randall (1983-84); 14 not out, J V Conroy (1983-84). BEST BOWLING: 7-78 F E Woollley (1983-84); 7-149 B L Cairns (1983-84).

Jones and Moody leave India an uphill task

FROM JOHN WOODCOCK IN PERTH

UNTIL the last 70 minutes, the fourth day of the fifth Test match here between Australia and India took a fairly predictable course, with Australia scoring what runs they needed for an evening declaration. More surprising was the way India, needing 442 to win, rained up 55 without loss in the last 18 overs when Australia must have been expecting to make inroads.

India go into the last day, therefore, with all their second-innings wickets standing and another 387 to get. A week ago, in the fourth Test in Adelaide, they needed 341 on the last day, also with all

their wickets in hand, and lost by only 38 runs, contending, with some justification, that under two different umpires they would have won.

Adelaide, however, was a very different sort of pitch, and one that was more like those on which the game is played in India.

Although the present pitch has had a little of the zip taken out of it by all the sunshine, it still offers plenty of bounce to bowlers who bend their backs. But it responds to stroke-makers, too, and there are plenty of those on the Indian side, two of them, Sidhu and Vengatkar, with a point to make after having been left out of India's World Cup party.

The centrepiece of yesterday's cricket was a partnership of 173 at just under a run a minute for Australia's fourth wicket between Jones and Moody, who both scored hundreds. While Jones will have re-established himself as a Test cricketer after two unrewarding years, Moody will have strengthened his claims to a more regular place in the Australian side.

Jones' unbeaten 150 was his tenth hundred in Test cricket, but his first since scoring two in the same match against Pakistan in January 1990. Moody's 101 was his second in only eight Test innings. Jones and Moody both benefited from Border's decision not to come in at No. 4

because of a slightly strained hamstring. This got them to the wicket that much sooner, probably to their relief.

Border should know that of Jones' Test hundreds, only two have been made at No. 5, which is now his set place in the order unless Border himself is indisposed.

Neither Jones nor Moody was quite at his best. But for both players, there was much at stake. Moody could be said, I suppose, to have stolen a march on Marsh, but that will not necessarily keep him in the Test side unless he or Boon goes in first, and Boon has been too successful at No. 3 for anybody to want to move him.

Jones hit 14 fours and a six

off 265 balls (395 minutes), his last 50 coming off only 64 balls as Australia pressed on for a declaration. Moody hit nine fours and a five in 149 balls (186 minutes). The five was the result of one of several overthrows as India's dejection began to show.

Boon went early, caught at second slip; Kapil picked up another wicket, his 197th away from home as against the 204 he has taken on those mostly thankless pitches in India.

I say mostly because Gavaskar considers the quickest pitch he ever played on was at Madras, against West Indies in 1978-9. Perth comes next, followed, surprisingly, by one that greeted

India at Old Trafford in the 1980s.

AUSTRALIAN First Innings 348 (D C Boon 107, A R Border 88, J M Moody 62, M Pringle 6 for 101).

Second Innings
W N Phillips c Kapil Dev b Smith 14
M A Taylor bowled b Kapil Dev 18
D C Boon c Kapil Dev b Pringle 18
D C Jones not out 10
J M Moody c More b Kapil Dev 107
M A Healy c More b Pringle 7
M G Hughes c Tardieu b Smith 11
A R Border not out 50
Extras (bats, 4) 10
Total 6th day (4th) 327
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-87, 8-91, 9-113, 4-181, 5-208, 6-215
SQUAD: Australia: 25-4-48-2; Pringle 24-4-118-1; Smith 23-4-121-2; Reid 24-4-78-1.
INDIA: First Innings 222 (S R Tendulkar 114, M R Waugh 4 for 68, M G Moody 62 for 80).

Second Innings
N S Sidhu not out 54
K Srikkanth not out 28
Srinivas (b 4, nb 1) 5
Total (no wicket) 55
BOWLING: McDermott 6-17-0; Hughes 5-0-18-0; Ruffell 4-11-0; Whitney 3-2-0. Umpires: A R Crafter and T A Pua.

Faldo tunes up for the season's major objectives

BY MITCHELL PLATT, GOLF CORRESPONDENT

NOT for the first time in his career, Nick Faldo is facing an examination of character. He will not need reminding that he enters the Dubai Desert Classic, which starts in Dubai tomorrow, having won only once in the last 14 months.

The situation is nowhere as alarming to him as it was when he went three years without a win in the 1980s, yet he still finds himself treading water.

At times, Faldo is not the easiest of sportsmen to question, but he was thoroughly open in Thailand last week, admitting his game was rusty. "All I want to do right now is get the swing on line so that I can see David (Leadbetter) next month with it remotely close to where I want it to be," he said.

Leadbetter, of course, is the chief engineer in Team Faldo. He rebuilt the Faldo swing seven years ago and the faithful pupil graduated in style, winning two Opens and two Masters.

Golf, however, is a capricious sport. Faldo mislaid his game in 1991. He fiddled with his set-up, he fiddled with his backswing, he fiddled with his putting stroke, all to no avail. Faldo could not camouflage the torment; he reacted angrily to intruders.

He was labelled aloof and criticised for his lack of team spirit as the United States regained the Ryder Cup at Kiawah Island. Faldo denied the charge and reacted strongly to it with a public rebuke.

His emotions betrayed him. As he banded out the reprimand, it revealed a vein of weakness. The so-called iron man of the fairways had a chink in his armour.

The Faldo whose expressions suggest that playing golf is a punishment usually reserves displays of sensitivity only for family and friends. Only recently he meticulously put together a tape that helped a young schoolboy come out of a coma following a car crash.

It is why, perhaps, he finds it impossible to lighten up on the course. He knows that if he drops his guard he could lose the self-control that has made him a champion. Already, he is preparing to win back the Masters in April.

In Thailand, he felt there was something wrong with his putting, so he worked tirelessly to find the problem. His alignment turned out to be two inches out. This week, Faldo, with a cameracorder never far away,

will continue to dissect his game.

"I did very little during five weeks off at home over the winter," he said. "Quite honestly, I couldn't see any point in practising because it was so cold. I put in a lot of thought in the armchair, but that was all. Now I have to get everything prepared for my meeting with David."

The crunch will come in the first week in March. Then, Leadbetter will decide what work must be done before Faldo plays four US Tour events before the Masters at Augusta. Faldo would like his game to be more spontaneous, but at the age of 34 he seems certain to continue his robotic ways. A change now might be too risky.

Anyway, Faldo is mesmerised by perfection; he insists that he is falling short on his obligation to be a role model. Faldo's answer is that winning is the name of the game and others should be encouraged by what he has achieved rather than the way he acts on the fairways.

He knows that 1992 offers the biggest challenge yet. He wants to regain the Masters from Ian Woosnam and become the first player since Jack Nicklaus to win it three times in four years. He sees Pebble Beach as the ideal place to win his first US Open. And in July, he returns to Muirfield, where, in 1987, he won his first Open.

"I have my schedule planned," he said. "I normally play the week before the US Open, but this year I'll go to Pebble Beach the week before to acclimatise and to get to know the course. Then I'll take a couple of days off in San Francisco before returning to the course to complete my preparations."

In the eight-man, nine-hole shoot out on the Emirate course yesterday, Faldo finished a second behind Ian Palmer, the winner in Bangkok at the weekend, who birdied the 547-yard 18th for victory.

If Faldo does not win in Dubai or, for that matter, one of the four tournaments leading up to the Masters, it will not unduly concern him. He has won only 26 tournaments in 17 years compared to Greg Norman's 58 and Ballesteros's 66. But he has won four majors; it is his mystique that captivates and consumes him.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Double for Davies

JONATHAN Davies becomes the first Wales rugby union captain to captain a Great Britain rugby league side when he leads them against France in Perpignan a week on Sunday (Keith Mackinn writes).

Four uncapped players are in the 19-strong squad named yesterday by Malcolm Reilly, the coach. Three are Welshmen, John Devereux, Jonathan Griffiths and Mark Jones, the Neath forward

who missed last season through injury and made his professional debut in this season's Charity Shield game for Hull against Wigan. The fourth uncapped choice is John Bentley, the Leeds wing.

SQUAD: Backer J Bentley (Leeds), G Connolly (Hull), J Davies (Widnes), J Devereux (Widnes), D Fox (Preston), J Griffiths (Leeds), J Jones (Neath), J Mackinn (Leeds), J Palmer (Bangkok), J Reilly (Leeds), J Smith (Leeds), J Taylor (Leeds), J Tredwell (Leeds), J Vengatkar (Leeds), J Whetton (Leeds), J Williams (Leeds), J Woodcock (Leeds), J Wright (Leeds).

Alliance sought by southern powers

BY DAVID HANDS

THE leading countries in the southern hemisphere believe that talks in Sydney later this month will lead to a loose confederation which will provide a counterweight to the four home unions.

It is hoped to establish the Southern Hemisphere Rugby Alliance when representatives from Australia, the World Cup holders, New Zealand, South Africa and Argentina sit down together on February 15. The aim, based on the premise that South Africa will be reintegrated into world rugby sooner rather than later, is for a co-ordinated playing strategy on and off the field.

Australia and New Zealand will pave the way at their annual meeting on St Valentine's day, though there may be little brotherly love for the home unions from Australia, some of whose administrators have expressed the view that England, for example, provided a stumbling block to

Australia's hopes of playing South Africa this year so that they could more easily do so themselves.

However the concept of a southern-hemisphere championship has been shelved. "Logistically, it would be almost impossible and, from a rugby point of view, it would not be desirable because of the effect it would have on tours," Norbert Byrne, one of Australia's International Rugby Football Board representatives, said yesterday. "Tours are the life blood of our game."

Instead, the southern powers will reintroduce the "super six" championship, involving Wellington, Auckland, Canterbury, Queensland, New South Wales and Fiji. Next year they hope to make it the "super ten", involving New Zealand's four leading provinces, South Africa's best three, Queensland, New South Wales and the leading Pacific island.

Midfield under scrutiny

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

IRELAND and Scotland, who meet at Lansdowne Road on February 15 in the five nations' championship, will name their XV's today. Although both have made a disappointing start to the championship, sweeping changes are unlikely.

Scotland's pack went well enough against England and the area that may come in for most criticism is the midfield. The same is true for Ireland, whose XV also suffered a heavy defeat against England. However, Ciaran Fitzgerald, the coach of the senior team, professed himself less disappointed by the 28-point defeat at Twickenham last Saturday than the one-point defeat by Wales.

"Their attitude could not be faulted," Fitzgerald said of his players, though he is aware of the gap that England have now developed between themselves and the other home unions. Perhaps, he suggested, Ireland should undertake more tours, and formalise the representative structure at under-21, su-

perior and under-25 levels so as to ensure the best use of available players.

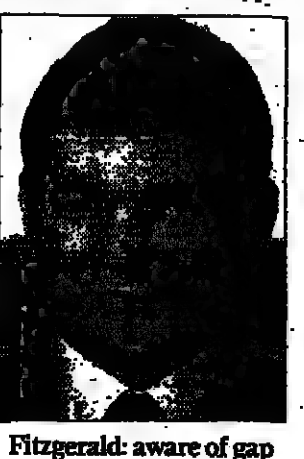
Ken Reid, the team manager, observed that a handful of injuries affected countries like Ireland and Scotland far more than England, with their greater playing numbers and the increasing benefits of league and divisional rugby. None the less, there may be calls for Philip Danaher, the Garryowen centre who has been capped

at full back, to be found a place in the side to meet Scotland and doubtless Des Fitzgerald, who withdrew with influenza last Friday, will return to the front row.

Didier Camberbero, the Bezziers stand-off half, has recovered from a pinched sciatic nerve and will be available for selection by France against England in Paris on February 15. Camberbero was affected by injury during the World Cup, when his place went to Thierry Lacroix and, against Wales last weekend, to Alain Penard.

South Africa must confirm this month that they will take part in the second student World Cup, which starts on June 30 in Italy.

The recent meeting of the competition's organising committee gave South Africa until March 1 to respond to the invitation. However, Taiwan have been admitted because of the withdrawal of South Korea, which means England's first match will be against Taiwan on July 1 in Naples.



Fitzgerald: aware of gap

Newcastle merger off agenda

NEWCASTLE Gosforth will go into Saturday's rearranged Pilkington Cup tie with Manchester knowing that a merger with the Northern club is unlikely to happen (David Hands writes).

Northern, threatened with relegation from division four north, have been told by a majority of their members that they do not want talks to be reopened.

The cup match this Saturday has forced Newcastle to move their league game with Wakefield to February 15.

Injuries to four stand-off halves, three of them internationals, have forced Cardiff to play their reserve scrum half, Andy Moore, in the No. 10 shirt for the league match against Swansea tonight.

Wayne Sheffield, the former All Black, will lead a New Zealand Invitation XV against Northampton at Franklin's Gardens on February 16 to raise funds for the club to tour Australia.

	Depth (cm)	Conditions	Run to resort	Weather	Temp (°C)	Last snow fall
AUSTRIA						
Alpech	35-65	good	open	snow	0C	4/2
		(New snow, twenty lifts, 17 pistes open)				
Bad Gastein	40-140	good	open	snow	-8C	4/2
		(All lifts, links and runs open, 20cm of new snow)				
Ellmau	40-70	good	open	snow	-1C	4/2
		(All lifts in Grossglockner open, ten lifts, 15 pistes open)				
Mayrhofen	25-125	fair	open	snow	-5C	4/2
		(Upper pistes good, lower closed, thirty lifts open, long queues)				
St Anton	65-140	good	open	snow	-7C	4/2
		(43 lifts, all runs open, 20cm powder on the slopes)				
Zell am Zee	80-130	good	open	snow	-3C	4/2
		(15cm of new snow, all lifts and all pistes prepared)				
FRANCE						
Saragat	15-45	fair	few	fine	0C	23/1
		(Lower runs patchy, resorts in Pyrenees in need of snow)				
Chamonix	75-115	good	open	snow	-3C	4/2
		(New snow has freshened pistes)				
Isola 2000	50-80	good	open	fine	+1C	24/1
		(Good skiing on northern side, elsewhere becoming worn)				
La Plagne	40-110	good	open	snow	-2C	4/2
		(Improved skiing with recent snowfall, 103 lifts)				
Val d'Isere	80-180	good	open	snow	-5C	4/2
		(Good skiing with powder top, best skiing at La Solaise)				
ITALY						
Cervinia	60-130	good	open	snow	-1C	4/2
		(Heavy snowfall yesterday has improved conditions)				
Courmayeur	60-130	good	open	snow	-1C	4/2
		(Fresh powder covering icy patches on lower runs)				
Seuze d'Oulx	50-110	good	open	cloud	0C	28/1
		(Some upper runs closed due to wind, Good skiing in prospect)				
SWITZERLAND						
Arosa	95-110	good	open	snow	-4C	4/2
		(Fresh snow on hard base, all 16 lifts operating)				
Chateau d'Oex	20-80	good	open	snow	-2C	4/2
		(Upper pistes good with fresh snow, lower runs still hard)				
Holetta	80-155	good	open	snow	-4C	4/2
		(Good layer of powder on all runs, all lifts operating)				
St Moritz	120-150	good	open	snow	-3C	4/2
		(New snow on hard base, Good skiing all round)				
Zermatt	40-140	good	open	snow	-2C	4/2
		(Fresh snow on soft base though some lower runs patchy)				

Supplied by Ski Hottels, L and U refer to lower and upper slopes

Anfield old boy warns his former club of perils in store in a tricky FA Cup tie

Liverpool on strange ground

By CLIVE WHITE

LIVERPOOL, one of Britain's most widely travelled clubs, enter what for them is uncharted territory tonight. Over the years they have experienced the atmosphere at many of the more intimidating stadiums around Europe, but never will they have encountered anything quite like Twerton Park.

The borrowed home of Bristol Rovers could hold more horrors for Liverpool in their rearranged FA Cup fourth-round tie tonight than the haunted house in Amityville. The night-time setting will only add to its menace, as one Liverpoolian will happily confirm.

Geoff Twentyman, Rovers' stalwart defender, would have liked nothing better than to have "spooked" Liverpool personally on the cramped, ramshackle ground which they rent from Bath City. But on the same afternoon that Rovers were drawn against Liverpool, Twentyman suffered a broken ankle and, needless to say, a short while later, a broken heart.

Twentyman had played for Liverpool reserves as a youngster and hoped to follow in the footsteps of another Geoff Twentyman — his father — who played for them in the Fifties and was later their chief scout for more than 20 years, before following Graeme Souness to Rangers.

The young Twentyman never quite made the grade but nursed the dream that one day he might get the chance to play against Liverpool. "If you're not good enough to play for them, it's got to be a hell of a thrill to run out and play against them," he said. Considering that he had only missed one game in the last four years, it was nothing if not an untimely blow. It must have hurt,

too, when Liverpool came knocking at Rovers' door for a defender three years ago and went away with Nicky Tanner, his friend. Liverpool even asked Twentyman for a character reference.

"There was never any problem with that, he was a diamond of a lad," Twentyman said. "It's nice to see colleagues progressing to the highest level. Mind you, it created a degree of surprise. I don't think Nicky would be upset at me saying that."

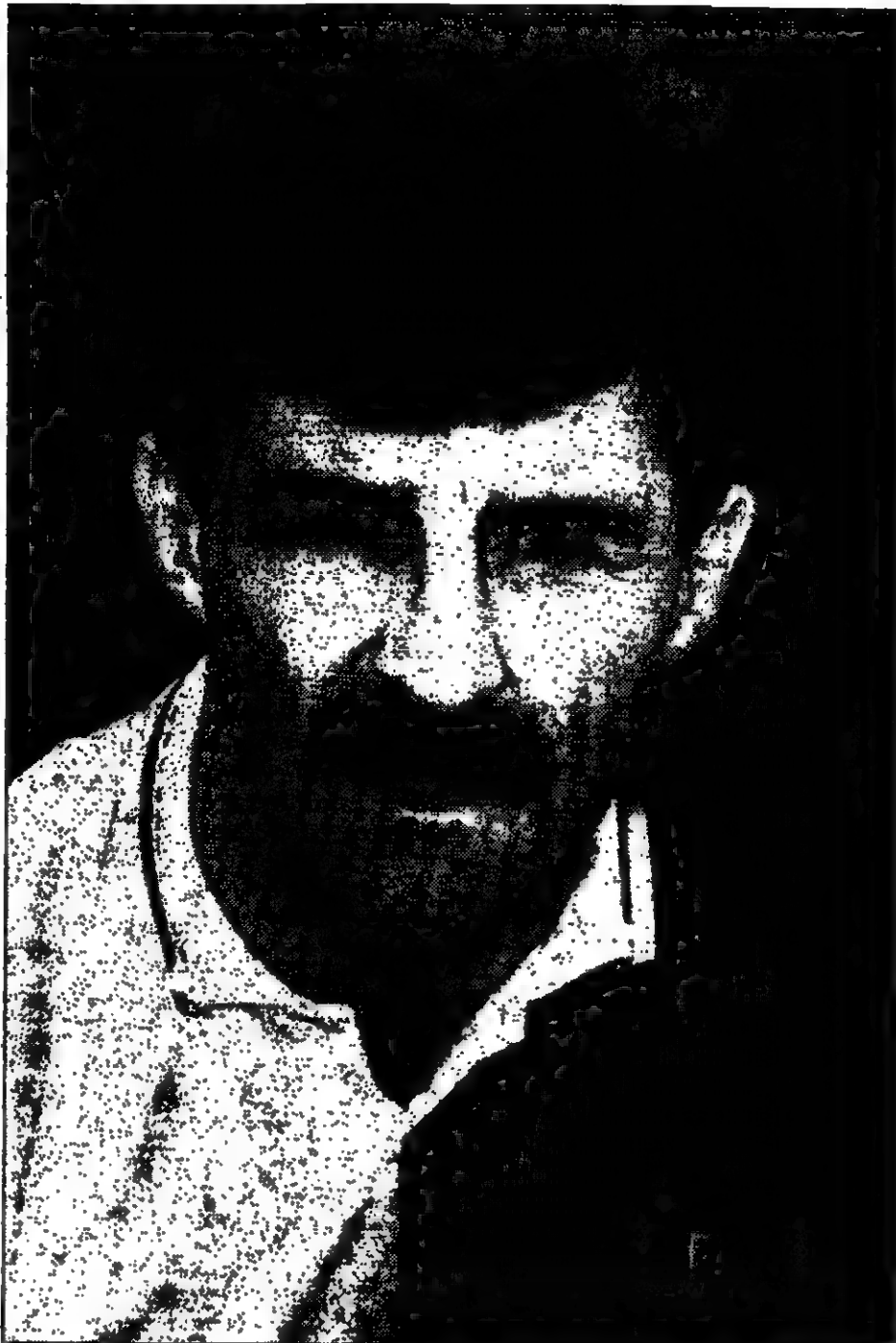
It may need more than Tanner's inside knowledge, however, to help Liverpool come to terms with Twerton. The defeat at Peterborough in the Rumbelows Cup will have removed any complacency but will not have prepared them in any way for what confronts them tonight.

"Peterborough's a tidy little ground by comparison," Twentyman said. "Our dressing-rooms are minute, especially the away team's. From the changing rooms you step straight onto the pitch. There are no corridors or offices to go into."

It's a difficult ground to play on because it's not enclosed. On one side you've got a hill where the cows graze and behind another you've got Bath city centre in the distance. When the ball goes into the air there's no backcloth. The pitch has a slope, too.

If plans being worked out by the club and Bristol city council come to fruition, then Twerton Park will soon become no more than a memory.

It is hoped that in three years an all-purpose stadium, which could house Rovers, will be built near the M5 at Hailen Marsh, a name which sounds rather more appropriate for their present abode.



Absent Rover: a broken ankle will keep Twentyman out of tonight's game

AC Milan and Juventus prepare for showdown

OVERSEAS FOOTBALL BY PETER ROBINSON

IF THE duel for the Italian championship has been taking shape since the autumn, then the gauntlet were thrown down on Sunday. AC Milan and Juventus prepared for their meeting at the San Siro next weekend, an encounter that will go a long way towards deciding the destiny of Serie A this season, with thumping 4-1 victories in Cagliari and Turin. As statements of intent, they were unequivocal.

Milan, as ever, were the more impressive, but only marginally. Italy's league leaders recovered from the shock of going a goal behind in the first half in Cagliari to respond with a second-half salvo typical of their magnificent form of late. Marco van Basten, back in the team after a bout of flu, struck three goals in a devastating 18-minute spell before Daniele Massaro, on as substitute, added the fourth. Crowd violence rang the afternoon's

only sour note as police resorted to tear gas to subdue rioting Cagliari supporters. Twenty people were injured.

On the field, Juventus, in second place in the table, were not to be outshone. Criticised so often for being negative, they showed that they can, on occasion, attack effectively and did so at the expense of Foggia. Roberto Baggio matched van Basten and scored three times, twice from the penalty spot, before Pier Luigi Castagnoli added a fourth in injury time.

Inevitably, almost as soon as the two games ended, attention switched to the forthcoming Milan-Juventus meeting in the San Siro. "It is the game of the season for us," Giovanni Trapattoni, the Juventus coach, said. "If we don't get beaten, even a draw would still leave the door open for us, allowing that Milan may slip up at some stage."

In Spain, the spotlight was on Leo Benhakker and Real

Madrid, a double-act making its return to the San Bernabé stadium. Benhakker, in his second term as coach, after the controversial dismissal of Radomir Anić, could only watch his league leaders draw 1-1 with Cadix and then listen as their captain, José Carmelo, described Real as "the worst Madrid side we've seen for years". The Dutchman's only consolation was that Barcelona made a mess of their chance to close even further in second place by losing 2-1 at Real Sociedad.

On Monday, the five leading Spanish clubs — CSKA, Spartak, Dynamo, Torpedo and Lokomotiv — refused to take part in the new Commonwealth of Independent States championship, due to start on March 1, prompting it to be abandoned hours later. The CIS participation in the European championships in Sweden will not be affected.

Butcher takes legal action

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

TERRY Butcher, the former England international defender, is suing Coventry City following his dismissal from his £250,000-a-year player-manager's job at Highfield Road four weeks ago.

Butcher is the third of three writers outstanding against Coventry taken out by former members of staff. Butcher's coaches, Mick Mills and Brian Eastick, who were dismissed in early December, issued their writs against the first division club two weeks ago.

Coventry have appointed Mike Kelly, England's former goalkeeper coach, as the assistant to their present manager, Don Howe. Kelly has been also acting as goalkeeper coach to the Swiss national squad.

Northampton Town, the fourth division club suffering a crippling financial crisis, could be forced out of business by the middle of next month. A petition from

Abbeyfield Press, a printing firm in the town, will ask for the High Court to wind up the club on March 11. The company is owed just under £15,000 for the printing of last season's programmes.

Jim Leighton's trials at Manchester United are, it seems, about to come to an end. Leighton, aged 33, United's former Scottish international goalkeeper who has played only one senior game for United since being dropped for the FA Cup final replay against Crystal Palace in 1990, is set to move north of the border to join Dundee for £200,000. He has been on loan at Reading.

The Hungarian international midfielder, Istvan Kozma, aged 27, yesterday agreed personal terms with Liverpool and will complete a £300,000 move from Dunfermline when he obtains a work permit, which is expected to arrive within the next week.

OLYMPIC GAMES

Atlanta reward backers with speed off mark

FROM DAVID MILLER IN COURCHEVEL

THE justification of the overseas vote for Atlanta last year as host city for the centenary Olympic Games of 1996, in preference to Athens, is apparent in the speed and efficiency of Atlanta's preparations. They could be ready two years in advance, as demonstrated by the publication already of a master-plan.

Furthermore, William Payne, president of the organising committee, intends that the opening ceremony in 1996 should be wholly international in concept, paying tribute to Greek history and tradition in the Olympics.

"History will be the theme of the opening ceremony, for these are not an American Games," Payne says. "I certainly hope that the Greeks, and their Olympic committee, will assist us with the ceremony. That we intend to be classical and not a Hollywood-style extravaganza. We

cannot do this without paying adequate tribute to Greece's contribution." At an appropriate time, Payne says, there will be discussion with Greece of possible co-hosting of one or two events.

Prince Alexandre de Merode, the chairman of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) medical commission, was yesterday suggesting that blood testing, in the drug-control programme, could be introduced in time for the start of the Winter Games on Saturday with the approval of the session this week.

Yet, this view is encountering doubts. Anita DeFrantz, the United States member of the IOC, and Harvey Schiller, secretary of the US Olympic Committee, maintain the view that blood testing is a personal invasion. I think it unlikely that the new system, voluntary though it will be at first, can be utilised in these Games.

SNOOKER

Foulds rewarded for tactical skill

BY PHIL YATES

NEAL Foulds, a perennial near-miss for the last two seasons, displayed consistency and application during a highly tactical 5-3 second-round victory over Terry Griffiths in the Benson and Hedges Masters at Wembley Conference Centre yesterday.

Foulds has quietly risen to fifth in the provisional world rankings and his ability to score heavily against Griffiths, following prolonged bouts of safety, was the key. Breaks of 74 and 39 helped Foulds lead 2-1 before he emerged from a 58-minute fourth frame — the longest of the tournament by 18 minutes — with a 3-1 advantage.

Griffiths, the world No. 11, won two of the next three frames in a single visit, with

runs of 73 and 78, but did not bother the scorers in the eighth as Foulds clinched a quarter-final against Steve Davis or Dennis Taylor.

"It may not have appeared so, with so much safety play, but I thought it was a high standard match," Foulds said.

Commenting on his inability to convert countless appearances in the latter stages of tournaments into titles — he has won only two in nine years as a professional — he said: "I've been so frustrated by it. I've played my best snooker in the early rounds and blown out towards the end. I don't think I've done myself justice on occasions."

RESULTS: Second round: N Foulds (Eng) 5-3 T Griffiths (Wales), 5-8.

SQUASH RACKETS

Cannons depleted in decisive match

VASARI Cannons, the Pimm's Premier League champions, this week pulled back a point in what is, at most, a three-horse race for the championship this season (Colin McCulligan writes). But their interest could end in the fixture against Welsh Wizards in Cardiff next week.

Cannons go into their match on Monday with their three leading players committed to the Liberation Cup in Kuwait. They will have only two recognised players and a team manager available for duty in Cardiff and must con-

template the possibility of conceding the match and their remaining championship hopes.

The Squash Rackets Association has refused to allow Cannons to switch the match. "We are very disappointed the SRA cannot be flexible over one fixture date," Neil Harvey, the Cannons team manager, said.

RESULTS: First division: Vasari Cannons 4, North Walsham 0, Mosaic Priory 1, Lasham Walsingham 1, P Lasham 4, Addicks Northam 0, Lasham 1, A and P Rackets 4, League positions: 1, Lasham 4, 2, Cannons 4, 3, Lasham 4, 4, Priory 3, 5, Rackets 2, 6, North Walsham 1, 7, Northam 0, 8, Addicks 0.

Leyland remains critical

Martin Leyland, the Swinton rugby league wing, remained critically ill yesterday after receiving a double fracture of the skull and two crushed vertebrae in a clash of heads with his team-mate, Glen Prince, on Sunday.

Leyland, aged 23, was making only his seventh senior appearance for Swinton.

Javed recovers

Cricket: Javed Miandad, who was ruled out of Pakistan's original World Cup squad because of a back injury, has recovered and will join the party shortly.

In the second match of their tour, Durham lost by two wickets to Zimbabwe in Harare yesterday, with David Graveney, their captain, splitting the wicket between the third and fourth fingers of his left hand while fielding.

Yorkshire had a record trading loss of £83,451 last year, reduced to £13,094 by realising investments and reclaiming tax. Leicestershire, who lost £69,000, have been given a £100,000 interest-free loan by Trevor Bennett, vice-president, to enable them to start work on a £450,000 indoor complex.

Castle crumbles

Tennis: Danny Sapsford beat Andrew Castle, the national champion, 6-0, 6-4 in the final of the ninth round of the LTA British Tour.

Sara Gomer, of Britain, beat the fourth seed, Raffaella Reggi-Concato, of Italy, 6-4, 6-7, 6-3 in the first round of the Femina classic tournament in Wellington.

Bjorn Borg, the former five-time Wimbledon champion who has now abandoned his wooden racket and been training at the Nick Bollettieri academy in Florida, will play in the ATP circuit tournament in Nice in April.

Intent to challenge

Yachting: Fifteen countries have either challenged or indicated their intention to challenge Britain's Royal Ocean Racing Club for the new Commodore's Cup, for cruiser-razor yachts designed to the relatively new international measurement system, to be sailed this year from Cowes in June.

Champion arrives

Boxing: Manning Galloway, of the United States, who defends his World Boxing Organisation welterweight title at the Wembley Conference Centre next Wednesday, said on his arrival in England yesterday that his boxing skills would be too good for the challenger, Pat Barrett.

Jordan drive

Motor sport: Mauricio Gugelmin, aged 28, the Egham-based Brazilian and a former British Formula Three champion, will drive for the Jordan grand prix team this season.

Boone defends

Rackets: Willie Boone, the holder, defeated John Prens, the favourite, in four games to win the United States amateur championship.

NETBALL

Southerners battle for county title

By LOUISE TAYLOR

THE English Counties League title looks to be a straight contest between Surrey, the holders, and Essex Metropolitan. Both retained their unbeaten records in conclusive fashion last Saturday: Surrey beat Hampshire North 67-45, Essex suppressed Cheshire 53-39 with Yvonne Foster scoring 32 goals.

Two games of the season are left, and it looks likely that the concluding fixture, on April 4, between Surrey and Essex Metropolitan will prove the decider.

Birmingham and Bedfordshire effectively cancelled out each other's championship chances by drawing 41-41 at Luton last Wednesday. Mathematically, Middlesex, whose match against Humberstone was postponed, can catch the top two. They are eight points adrift though, and even with five points for a win, overtaking both Surrey and Essex Met is a tall order.

The senior and under-18 England squads will assemble for a training camp at Birmingham this weekend. On Monday, squads will be announced for their home international fixtures against Scotland on February 15.

FOOTBALL

5 AND 6 SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Second division: Alloa v Cowdenhill (Aberdeen); 2-1; 3rd: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 4th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 5th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 6th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 7th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 8th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 9th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 10th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 11th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 12th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 13th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 14th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 15th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 16th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 17th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 18th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 19th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 20th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 21st: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 22nd: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 23rd: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 2-1; 24th: Dundee v Dundee United (Dundee); 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Compromise suggests 22-team format is retained

Premier League deal may not satisfy FA

By PETER BALL

THE FA Premier League may now be back on course for next season, but at significant cost to the Football Association's original ideal. In their meeting at Lancaster Gate yesterday, FA, Football League and Premier League negotiators proposed that the new League will remain at 22 clubs for three seasons, finally reducing to 20 in 1995.

The compromise, a way out of the impasse of relegation and promotion during the transitional seasons, will be presented to the first division clubs in London on February 14, and to the remainder of the Football League at Walsall on February 17. If, as is likely, it is accepted, it will

then be put forward to the FA Council, when it meets on February 20, to decide whether the League can go ahead.

That is where the problems may start. "The transitional provisions were not provided for in the September agreement and therefore there had to be sensible discussions to reach a compromise. I think it is a reasonable one," Sir Bert Millichip, the chairman of the FA, said yesterday.

Whether the FA Council will regard it in that light will be the testing point. The major attraction of the new League for many councillors was the promise of a smaller first division to help the national team, but this proposal means that Graham Taylor will be faced with going into

the World Cup finals in 1994 with his leading players still undergoing their intolerable workload.

"I am disappointed, and I think council will be disappointed," Graham Kelly, the FA's chief executive, confirmed yesterday. "We will have to wait and see if they will approve it."

If the FA does not ratify the new League on February 20, it would mean that the Premier League will almost certainly not start next season and that prospect may serve to concentrate their minds. There will undoubtedly be considerable unhappiness even so.

The proposal is likely to be received more sympathetically by the clubs. Many first

division clubs were reluctant to lose the extra home games that a reduction to 20 would mean, and delaying it for three years will certainly lessen the damage, even if, in theory, it means that 13 of the current first division could have lost their place in the sun by the time the League settles at 20 clubs.

The Football League response is more problematic, but the likelihood must be that the clubs will approve the compromise. There are, however, other problems from their point of view.

"There are still major stumbling blocks," Gordon McKeag, the president of the Football League, said. One which still remains to be solved is criteria for admission to the Premier League, with the Football League rejecting the FA's attempt to impose a minimum ground capacity on candidates. If that is not solved, the whole package could still fall down, so there is clearly still a long way to go before the Premier League takes off.

□ **Bern:** European football's governing body, Uefa, said yesterday that individual clubs competing in the European Cup will no longer be able to sell television rights for play-off matches. A statement said Uefa's executive committee had decided to market the television and advertising rights under the authority's own name with effect from next season.

Uefa said this would earn at least \$49 million next year, to be divided between the clubs taking part. The new system will apply only to the play-offs. (AP)

League calls for financial help from government

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

THE Football League yesterday called for greater financial support from the government after a private report showed that the clubs are, collectively, up to £130 million in debt.

Although the League will contest certain statistics in the survey — it was based on replies from 61 of the 93 clubs — they are prepared to use it to push their case for an increased cut of the pools betting duty.

The government has already released £100 million over five years to help clubs implement the recommenda-

tions contained in the Taylor Report. However, it will clearly not be enough if the all-seat rule remains.

"The figure of £130 million is very emotive," Andy Williamson, assistant secretary of the League, said. "A significant proportion of that money, probably more than £50 million, will be in the first division."

"Clubs lower down are far less exposed but the size of operations still makes it a difficult problem. It underlines why the deadline for implementation of Taylor will be impossible to meet unless

financial assistance from government is extended."

The report, produced by Dr Simon Pitt, formerly of the London Business School, was published on the day when representatives of the Football Association, Football League and Premier League met for further talks in London to discuss the future of the sport.

Pitt suggests that a dozen clubs are facing extinction and Williamson confirmed that six are receiving cash assistance from the Professional Footballers' Association.

Absentees overshadow replay

By LOUISE TAYLOR

THEY almost certainly will not play, but the names of Andy Gray and Teddy Sheringham have been mentioned in the build-up to tonight's Rumbelows Cup fifth-round replay between Nottingham Forest and Crystal Palace at the City Ground.

While speculation suggests Forest are prepared to sell Sheringham to Crystal Palace for £1.5 million, Gray is

transfer-listed by Palace and available for £1 million. Rumour even suggests a possible player-exchange. Gray is scheduled to play for the reserves at Aldershot and his absence could provide Simon Osborn with a chance to establish himself in the Palace midfield.

Alan Smith, the club's assistant manager, said yesterday: "People like Simon and Geoff Thomas have got to be our tigers and get in amongst

Forest." Forest, in contrast, were hardly in ferocious mood last Saturday when they lost 5-2 at home to Sheffield United.

Having himself been on the wrong end of a five-goal thrashing by Clough's team earlier in the season, Steve Coppell, the Palace manager, is not about to underestimate them. "Saturday was just a one-off," he said. "There is nothing wrong at Forest."

Sheringham was dropped for the Sheffield United match, but Coppell, who sold Marco Gabbiadini to Derby County for £1.2 million last week, declined to comment on his alleged interest in the former Millwall forward who moved to Nottingham for £2 million last summer.

Forest made an offer for Gray last week, and the player said: "Hopefully, there will be a development with Forest on Thursday or Friday. I would definitely be interested in them. I have gone from playing for England in Poland to a reserve match at Aldershot in just three months, but it is a situation I have got to get out of, and I am strong enough to do just that."

Back at the City Ground, Forest and Palace will compete for a semi-final tie against Tottenham Hotspur, Nottingham's conquerors in last season's FA Cup final.

Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, has delayed announcing his side for the FA Cup fourth-round replay at home

to Southampton, but, with only Steve Bruce injured, he selects from a position of strength and the indications are that Lee Sharpe will start as a substitute after recovering from injury.

United, who drew 0-0 at The Dell last week, must contend with the attacking ability of Alan Shearer, ironically the subject of speculation regarding a possible £4 million transfer to Old Trafford, and Matthew Le Tissier.

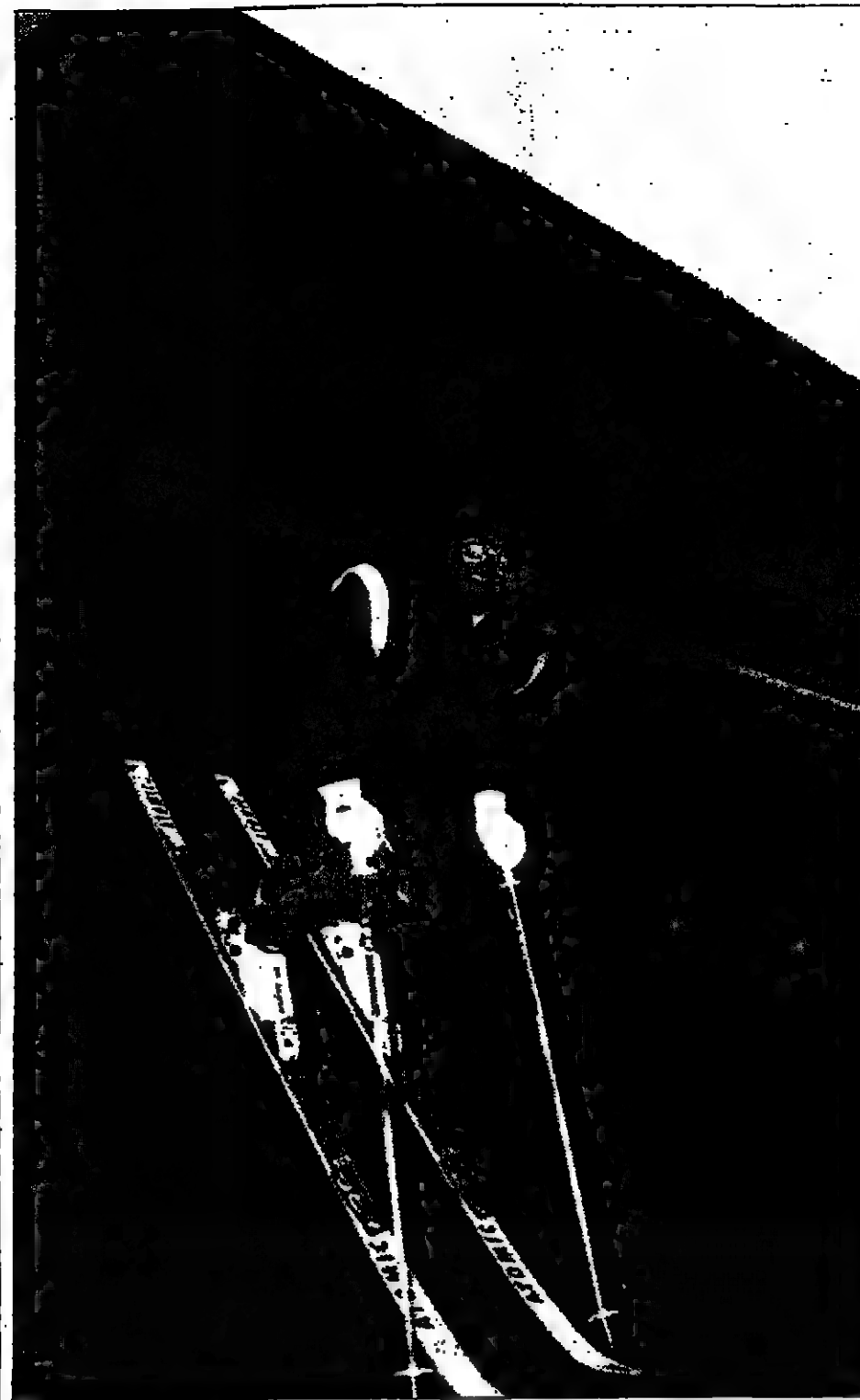
Ferguson is concerned that his team, lucky not to lose in the first game, have scored only ten goals in their last nine games. "We must restore our goal ratio," he said. "I think the fact that Lee Sharpe is fit again and may soon be back on the wing could help in this respect."

Tonight's winners face a fifth-round tie at Bolton Wanderers.

Test for Liverpool, page 29



Coppell: tigerish spirit



Slippery slope of success: Edwards poses on a Bedfordshire roof yesterday

Grounded Eagle hoping to soar again in 1994

By DAVID POWELL

TWO years is a long time in snow business. For Eddie Edwards, it will seem an eternity. The sixteenth Winter Olympics begin on Saturday, but already Edwards is yearning for the seventeenth, in 1994.

The coming Albertville spectacular will not be the same without him; no tales, we can assume, of an Olympian denied entry to his own press conference, or of nights in a mental hospital on the way to the Games, or of a ski jumper strapping rockets to his skis. The low-flying highlighter of the last Games, in Calgary, has, thanks to a blocking move by authority, been made persona non grata for Albertville.

Edwards, glasses thick with skin to match, attracted worldwide attention for his miserable ski jumping in Calgary. He was last in the 70 metres and last in the 90 metres. Yet he was the embodiment of Olympic spirit and, for that reason, the most popular figure at the Games. Popular with almost everyone, except the British Olympic Association (BOA).

Embarrassed by Edwards' cornering the publicity market, the BOA raised the standard of qualification for the Albertville beyond his reach. Not that it has minded taking advantage of his profile. In the last six months, according to Andrew Petherick, his

manager, Edwards has made "at least a dozen appearances as the figurehead at BOA Olympic fund-raising events, the majority unpaid."

Declared bankrupt in November with debts of £119,000, now is his time for making money again. He lost some £300,000 from his trust fund; the result, he claims, of mismanagement by the trustees. But a slope runs both ways and what goes down must come up: the offers of work have been rolling in again.

As we talked yesterday, two tabloid daily newspapers were fighting over him as a columnist. Minnesota was on the phone for him to open its ski run, and the man himself was looking forward to being Eurosport's expert in Paris at the Olympic ski jumping.

There were other offers beside. "It has been all go," Petherick said.

None of this is any consolation for not being in Albertville. But his hopes of being in Lillehammer for the 1994 Games have just been raised by the return of his licence to compete in European Cup events. With the licence, which he has been denied for the past two years, he can aspire to ranking in the world's top 50 and, with that, be almost guaranteed Olympic selection.

"I would say I would have at least an 80 per cent chance

of competing in Lillehammer," Edwards, aged 28, said. He has not competed at the highest level, the World Cup, for three years, and only once in that time in the European Cup. "I have never stopped training," he said. "I am still trying to prove that I am a good skier. I just want to get in as much practice as I can between now and Albertville."

A slip of the tongue. He meant to say Lillehammer but the thought that he should be in France now, with the British team, will not go away. "The British Ski Federation [BSF] have been very uncooperative as regards giving me my licence for the European Cup and I've only just managed to force their hand," he said.

The BSF was one of three parties involved in handling his trust. "There is ongoing litigation for the money that has been lost and it is likely to result in an out-of-court settlement," Petherick said.

In the meantime, he has been earning what he can from being a stunt man, wing-walking on an aircraft and skiing down a ramp to jump ten cars. In Christchurch. Nothing is certain in ski jumping and he cleared only eight. In May, he will try soaring over boats on the river. Who will lend the ninth and tenth boats? Not the BOA, you can be sure.

Plan to silence English support

By JOHN GOODBODY

THE French, still smarting over their defeat in the Rugby World Cup quarter-final, are planning to separate English supporters into small groups for the five nations' championship match in Paris on February 15, so as to prevent the visitors from coherently cheering their team.

While Pierre Berbizier, the new French coach, has been trying to take the heat out of the situation by talking with evident friendliness last month to English journalists and inviting them to a reception before the match, the new president of the French federation has other ideas.

Bernard Lapasset said yesterday: "I never want to hear the growing chant of 'England, England' again. I have a plan to silence the English choirs. I am going to split them up into small groups." They will be dispersed round the 50,000-seat Parc des Princes.

However, despite the precautions, Lapasset must still keep French tickets out of English hands. The federation has no control over French clubs, which are free to sell their allocation of tickets.

"As far as atmosphere is concerned, it is a worry. Our opponents could find themselves with more than double the number of tickets and it would stop us from establishing a strong presence," he said.

He called on rugby supporters round the country to come to Paris to support the national team "which is going to need this backing to beat the formidable England team." England's victory in the World Cup was followed by the referee being allegedly insulted by, among others, Pascal Ondarts, the prop, and manhandled by Daniel Dubroca, the coach, who later resigned.

Lapasset has a further scheme to drum up support for the French. He has invited two brass bands from the southwest to lead the French cheering — and to drown the English chants.

More rugby, page 28

Games site hit by snow falls

Albertville: The first snowstorm in nearly a month blanketed the French Alps with up to 30cm of snow yesterday, just four days before the opening of the Winter Olympics here.

The French weather service said it would continue snowing until tomorrow at the highest elevations, including Val d'Isère, site of the men's downhill on Sunday, and Les Saixes, where the cross-country skiing competition also begins Sunday. Les Saixes appeared to have the heaviest snowfall, with 25cm to 30cm by mid afternoon.

Lower down the Alps in Albertville, heavy rain drenched the outdoor Olympic speed skating track, hampering the training plans of early arrivals. Skaters braved the conditions only briefly. (Agencies)

Samaranch wants to take Nebiolo on board

FROM DAVID MILLER
IN COURCHEVEL

A NEW controversy is about to envelop the session of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) starting here today. It is similar to that which accompanied the election of Mario Vázquez Rana of Mexico as an IOC member at the session in Birmingham last summer. This time the issue is that other Latin who rouses IOC resistance, Primo Nebiolo, the president of international athletics, and his integration within the IOC.

The issue is, I believe, sound on principle but clouded by personalities. For the past 24 hours, Juan Antonio Samaranch, the president of the IOC, and Nebiolo, who arrived in this

Alpine village on Monday, have been working behind closed doors in continuous discussion with those who might support Nebiolo's mission, and an attempt to limit any opposition.

Samaranch's personal prestige, after almost 12 years as president, is sufficient not to be looking to award subjective favours. He sincerely believes that it is necessary to the effective function of the IOC that the president of the Association of National Olympic Committees (Vázquez Rana) and of the major Olympic sport, athletics, are included. The president of the other most prominent sport, Joao Havelange, of football, has been an IOC member for almost 30 years, well before he became FIFA president.

Samaranch has been wishing to embrace Vázquez Rana and Nebiolo for almost ten years, and was twice frustrated when attempting to make them ex-officio members. The chance came to have Vázquez Rana elected in his own right as member for Mexico, in succession to Dr Eduardo Hay, but this met serious objections at Birmingham from a dozen or more members and there were many abstentions on the vote.

Gossip in the hotels here yesterday was of little else. Some of those who might be expected to vote against Nebiolo were merely shrugging their shoulders with resignation. The reaction of the Princess Royal, president of the equestrian federation, will be interesting. Nebiolo is

also president of the Association of Summer Olympic International Federations, in which position he has several times crossed swords with the Princess.

Samaranch is believed likely to base his justification on the recommendations, contained in a letter to him in 1980 from Lord Killanin, on his retirement, that the IOC president should have the right to nominate up to two advisers within the IOC on important Olympic-related matters. What, therefore, will be required during the session is adjustments of the charter by-laws to accommodate this.

The view of Samaranch is that certain problems, concerning finance, and other disputes, will be eased by Nebiolo's admission;

though, even the executive board has mixed feelings. While excluded, Nebiolo has publicly and privately repeatedly protested at the anomaly — in his opinion — of the situation. Once within the hallowed club, however, the friction would be reduced almost overnight.

There are those who would believe that the failure of the IAAF to re-admit an integrated South African federation is because of Nebiolo's demand for unanimity among former South African racial government bodies of athletes.

There is suspicion that an IOC welcome would ameliorate his opinion, and it is clearly important that South African athletes should be in the team for the Summer Games in Barcelona.



Nebiolo: controversial

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MEDIA
End of an era:
Paul Fox on
David
Plowright

LIFE & TIMES

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 5 1992

On the run with Rushdie

Three years ago, Marianne Wiggins joined her husband, Salman Rushdie, in hiding after the author of *The Satanic Verses* fell victim to the Ayatollah Khomeini's fatwa. Ms Wiggins kept a diary, from which this essay, *Croeso I Gymru* (Welcome to Wales), is extracted

We were on the lam in Wales, running through the Black Mountains like un-armed smugglers from the right-eyes with their guns. Everywhere we went there were slate tombstones, upright shadows, on the hills. In the towns there were slate houses, with slate roofs. There was darkness, dead as coal, behind the windows of the houses. There were ravens in the fields and on the roads. English words from a Welsh poet seemed to sit on the horizon like an advertisement for the land: *This sad distracted abstract of my woe*. The mountains wore a beard of snow, even as the pussy willows in the valleys bloomed. Pussy willow trees in Wales are called "goat" willows. I found out, because goats like to eat their leaves. Only the male trees, with their yellow catkins, are called "pussy".

Where we'd found a hideout for a while, there was a male goat willow tree in bloom that I looked out to from my window. I cut some of its branches for a jar that I placed in the window in the kitchen of the house, but then the catkins, turning golden, made me sneeze.

I found out about the "goat" name for the tree from a book called *Trees of Britain* that I found on the bookshelf in the kitchen next to cookbooks and some novels by Alistair MacLean. That's how I knew about the catkins, but I didn't know what "catkin" meant. I looked it up in the dictionary that I always travel with. Anyone who knows me knows that I can't spell. I have to keep a dictionary with me within reach, even for something as simple as writing a letter. There are times when I can't spell *Sincerely*. At home, where we used to live, I had a dictionary handy in each room. Now I have a single one, and a good thing, too — the people who are with us now depend on it for Scrabble.

A "catkin", I can tell you, is an inflorescence. I depend on books for meaning. I depend on them for definition. A "catkin" is a thing defined as "a reduced flower of either sex". Following the definition of "catkin" in my dictionary there was the advice, "See *ament*". I didn't feel like seeing *ament*. Instead I watched the thaw of snow across the tops of mountains. The Welsh say when there's snow on mountains it's an indication

there'll be more. I learned that from a book about Welsh legends. Eventually I did see *ament* and its definition was "another word for catkin". Its second definition, *ament II*, was "Noun. Psychiatry. A mentally deficient person."

Next to the houses built of plastered-over slate along the roads, the houses with dark windows, there were hedgerows, yews and daffodils. No kitchen gardens grew. A kitchen garden — chamomile, dill, parsley, carrots, rue — is an English affection: in Wales the land around a house is purely land, no frill, no spices grown. The potato did not root in Wales until a century post-Raleigh and even in the middle of the 18th century at the Aberystwyth market, potatoes, per pound, were as expensive as the local cheese. Oats were what the Welsh ate, in a porridge they called *bwdran*. Cawl, a vegetable hotpot with potatoes and a bit of bacon or a sheep joint added to it, is the traditional dish in Wales. Sheep are the common stock.

Walking upon a hill one morning I found a sheep skull embedded in the earth beside a corkscrew holly. Sheep were everywhere. We laughed sometimes, called the scenery *The Big Sheep*. On days when I could walk, when it wasn't pelting hail or rain or snowing, on days when they allowed me to, I walked and walked, straight up sheer hills, out of anger, up over tatty lichen-strewn terrain punctuated now and then by those wind-bleached sheep skulls beached like whelks, and by fox holes and those twisted holly trees surprising the horizon.

Above me, at about two feet at scarily intervals, jump jets: a Harrier's harangue. RAF: unmarked: some of them dark green and some of them with red and white striped bellies. These were the Hunters, I learned. And I learned other things: that a sheep can recognise another sheep but can't differentiate between a horse and human. That a swede is a rutabaga and is used for cattle fodder. That sheep eat beetroot and molasses. That great tracts of Wales are designated by Great Britain solely for the practice of war games.

Near where we were hiding there was an MOD training camp where paratroopers trained. Young men in green track suits with the information COMBAT '89 stenciled on their sweatshirts

practised calisthenics in our road, and military Land Rovers outnumbered every other sort of vehicle I saw.

I was afraid I would be recognised, and once a military Land Rover passed me on our road and slowed down and stopped and waited and I took off, changed direction and headed back across the meadows. When I told this to the people that we have to live with now they told me that it wasn't that the person in the Land Rover had identified me as the person who I am but that he had identified me as a woman. The people that we have to live with now have taught me a few things about an all-male camp: they like to look at women. Men do. So I'm told.

Then once, too, I thought the woman in the health food store in the market town I shopped in had recognised me, owing to the way she stared at me. But the people that we have to live with now told me that she stared at me, most likely, because I have an accent. One of the people that we live with now asked me when he came to us the first time, "Say, do you know Neil Schreiber?" No, I said. Who's Neil Schreiber? "Chap I know. American. He has an accent just like yours. I thought maybe you knew him." But in my village I was tempted to reply *there are 800 million people*.

Another one of the people that we have to live with now told me that when his wife, who's Thai, came to live in England she thought the sheep were a foreign breed of dog.

There were so many sheep where we were hiding that 100,000 were stolen last year around the town of Brecon. Brecon is a market town. At the Brecon market there were: barren cows, fat bulls, fat ewes, fat hogs, weaned calves, breeding cows, bulling heifers, cull bulls, pedigree beef bulls and rams. I learned this by reading local papers.



Marianne Wiggins, an American in Wales: "Through the weekly paper I learned location, began to find out where I was and who the people were that sometimes passed by"

what *pleidiol wylf i'm gwlad* meant. Its meaning became a sort of test, a sort of project to me.

My days were filled with projects; one day I cooked a swede, for instance. It seemed to take forever. One day, too, I catalogued the differences among the sorts of lichen I had found. One day I tried to learn about the game of rugby. I made a project out of watching birds for about a minute every other day, or when I saw an interesting, bright-coloured one.

A hatch, or something — blue, and yellow-breasted — liked to feed on certain catkins in the tree outside my window, and I learned the border-country legend about one magpie brings you rotten luck but when you see two magpies on the wing together you're going to get a treat. So every time you see a single magpie you're supposed to say: "Where's your mistress. Mister Magpie!" and the magpie is assumed to answer, *By my side but*

you can't see her. One day we got a letter from a friend in Canada whose eight-year-old daughter wrote to say that she was working on a project about blinking. This was a subject that I filed away for future use.

In the meantime I had learned that *plismon* is the Welsh word for policeman. But as for *pleidiol wylf i'm gwlad*: I was having trouble cracking it. *Gwlad*, I found out, means "country". But the rest, the other words... the closest I could come to *pleidiol* was *pleidlo*, the verb which means "to plead".

Continued on page 5

The local paper that I looked forward to the most was published every week, on Thursdays. Thursdays, then, held definite excitement. The paper cost 24 pence. No other journal — not *The New York Times* nor *The Washington Post* nor *The Guardian* — was more looked forward to by me during those weeks than the *Brecon-Radnor Express & Powys County Times*, 16 pages every week. It was through that weekly that I learned location, began to find out where I was and who the people were that sometimes passed by me on the road.

I was not allowed to hold a conversation with a stranger. The question *Are you staying in the village?* when I went into a store one day to buy some coal to fire the stove which heated the house where we were hiding prevented me from ever going back. I was the American — Americans around those parts were few. Why was I there? What was my purpose? The coal stove in the kitchen was a Bosky. I learned about the different kinds of anthracite that

one can buy. I learned why many of the sheep are painted colours — coded blue, magenta, orange, like flash-cards on the hills: carded wool. One colour means they've lambed, another means the ram has visited.

Dafodil is the Welsh word meaning sheep, and *dyfodol* is the Welsh word meaning future. I know this because in Brecon one day I bought a dictionary and a book called *Welsh for Learners*. I needed to find out about the daffodils, I wanted to find out how they, the daffodils, became a symbol of the Welsh. I knew about the leek, because a leek is on pound coins.

There are three imprints of pound coins in Great Britain: one of them is English, one of them is Scottish, one is Welsh. All bear the Queen's profile on one side, although on the English and the Scottish coins her image is much younger-looking than the image on the Welsh. The Scottish pound coin has a thistle, verso, a thistle set inside a crown. Around the edge of the Scottish version there's the motto *NEMO ME IMPUNE LA-CESST*: No one touches me without unpleasant consequences.

On the verso of the English one there's the coat of arms of England and a lot of French — *HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE* and *DIEU ET MON DROIT* — and around the edge of it there are the Latin words *DECUS ET TUTAMEN*.

On the Welsh pound coin there's a fancy leek, looking like a fleur-de-lis, with its stem stuck through a crown, just like the Scottish thistle. Around its edge are etched the words *PLEIDIOL WYF I'M GWLAD*. I needed to find out

what *pleidiol wylf i'm gwlad* meant. Its meaning became a sort of test, a sort of project to me.

My days were filled with projects; one day I cooked a swede, for instance. It seemed to take forever. One day, too, I catalogued the differences among the sorts of lichen I had found. One day I tried to learn about the game of rugby. I made a project out of watching birds for about a minute every other day, or when I saw an interesting, bright-coloured one.

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An everyday story of separated folk

The day that I became single again — some time last August — I felt it was important to perform some symbolic acts. After all, I reasoned, you never know when a social anthropologist might be watching. I tried to picture what a newly single woman would be expected to do, to mark the reclaiming of the living environment after years of cohabitation. Washing the walls and beating the carpets sounded the right kind of thing — but on the other hand it also sounded a bit strenuous, and I didn't want to alarm the cats.

So perhaps, instead, the newly single woman might do a little light tidying? Form the old newspapers into distinct new piles? Pick up the dusty used tissue that she always stared at, mindlessly, through hour-long telephone conversations? This all seemed manageable, given the emotional circumstances. Oh yes, and she might ceremoniously replace the lavatory seat to its "down" position, with an exaggerated flourish and a round of applause. This was ample Coming of Age in Samoa stuff for a single afternoon.

But I remember that the first evening I was also moved to root through a heap of books until I found Anthony Storr's *Solitude*.

This was a book I had wanted to read for a very long time; and I felt I should seize the moment. I read it avidly until 9.30pm, after which I left it unopened on the coffee table for the next three months, hoping that some of its inspiring message would miraculously buoy my spirit. I don't know why I stopped reading. People must have thought I was a real stoic, savouring a book called *Solitude* over such a long period. Either that, or, of course, or that I couldn't read without moving my lips.

Storr thinks that solitude has much to recommend it. He says it promotes creativity — making people write novels, and so forth. Look at Anita Brookner, Edward Gibbon and, er, many, many others. Interestingly, a large proportion of our philosophers turn out to have been lonely miserable gits who walked about wearing buckles on their heads.

There was something wrong with the appeal of this argument, but I couldn't put my finger on it. Months later, however, I do still hold out hope that the novel-writing and world-class philosophy stage will bounce along nicely when the time is right. I have bought a few note-pads, just in case. And a cardigan. The only trouble is that at the moment I

SINGLE LIFE
Lynne Truss on
rehabilitation
after cohabitation



can't seem to pass a rather more mundane stage in the experience of solitude. I can't seem to overcome my excitement at being able (at long last) to listen to *The Archers* without having to do it in the shed.

I never accepted the idea that "love means never having to say you're sorry". In my own case, love invariably means: never being allowed to listen to *The Archers*

and in fact saying "Oops, sorry, I'll turn it off then, shall I?" when discovered in the guilty act. I kept faith with *The Archers* during three solid years of strict prohibition, just waiting for the day when I could again turn the theme tune up to maximum volume, as a statement: "Yes, I love *The Archers*, and I'm proud."

My fanaticism may have been forced underground, but it remained resilient, like the French Resistance. I take this as living proof that inside every cohabiting person there is a single person humming "Dum de dum de dum de dum" waiting to get out.

The more I think about it, the more I impress myself — the clever ways I found to mask my addiction. I remember those Sunday mornings when I would grab the car-keys at around 10.15am, saying, "Just popping down to Croydon for the Sunday papers, dear. I shouldn't be more than, ooh, let's say an hour." And I would dash off and sit in the car with dark glasses on, agog to the omnibus edition on the car radio. I don't suppose the boyfriend ever suspected anything — although he did say: "Why are you taking a flask of cocoa?"

What's wrong with buying them from the man on the corner? I expect the *Archers* euphoria

stage was something Wittenstein went through, too — and Edward Gibbon. I shouldn't wonder. The other novelties certainly wore off, in time. The tidying of newspapers, for example, started to look like a mug's game, so I ditched it. I expect I can call in a specialist with a fork-lift truck when I can't kick a path to the window any more.

For a while, too, I made a point of playing records with significant words — "I'm Gonna Wash That Man Right Out of My Hair" and "I'm Still Standing", by Elton John, and lectured friends on the potency of cheap music.

But now the flat is sometimes eerily quiet, and I rattle around in it like a lone Malteser in a shoebox. It is an odd thing, this single life. And Gloria Steinem's famous feminist axiom — that a woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle — has been of strangely little comfort. I agree with the sentiment, but I wish she had chosen a different image. Unfortunately I find it very easy to imagine a sardine on a mountain-bike joyfully bowling along country lanes, or a tuna in a yellow jersey winning the Tour de France on the happiest day of its life.

TOMORROW
John Diamond's Private Life

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Promising a new age of reason

INTERVIEW

Mark Fisher, the Labour Party spokesman on the arts, outlines to Richard Morrison a "reasonable" plan, should Labour take power.

Difficult man to pick an argument with, Mark Fisher. He nods soothingly when you make your noisiest points, then smoothes them with a seamless blanket of abstract nouns. Coherence, access, infrastructure, equality, strategy, underfunding, implementation: the whole arts-speak thesaurus, delivered in an immaculate flow.

No surprises there. Fisher, aged 47, has spent his five years as Labour's arts spokesman cultivating bureaucrats and lobbyists with tremendous zest. He has built up a series of lectures in which arts mandarins flay present inadequacies and extol rosy tomorrows. And in the unlikely event that the general election is decided by whether the arts minister or his shadow has a better grasp of facts and figures, Fisher will not be found wanting.

He is also so obviously a reasonable man. Perhaps seeing both sides of every question is an irrepressible instinct for an Eton-educated Labour MP who is the son of a Tory MP. Yes, he is "quite happy to pay tribute to the government: over the last three years the Arts Council grant has done better than the rate of inflation". Yes, Lord Palumbo's work as Arts Council chairman is "admirable". "Though it's no secret that Mr Palumbo is a Conservative, he went out on a limb and welcomed our policy document when it was announced."

And yes, a Labour government will go on supporting the Tories' most famous arts initiative: the Business Sponsorship Incentive Scheme. No, Labour isn't worried about the arts relying on business sponsorship. "Corporate sponsors are now doing many more imaginative and high-risk things than they were five years ago." Yes, a national lottery would be a great way of raising money for restoring the fabric of our cultural institutions.

The flow of sweet moderation goes on. True, Labour will be introducing a statutory requirement for every local authority to spend money on the arts. But even here "we are not proposing a prescriptive policy of a typical



Awaiting office? Mark Fisher MP, Labour Party spokesman on the arts, in front of Willem de Kooning's *Untitled VIII*, at the Tate Gallery

amount or a typical range of responsibilities". True, Labour is slightly regretful that although the Royal Opera House soaks up £18 million of subsidy, only the well-off can afford decent seats. "Rather urgently in the 1990s," says Fisher, in a brisk voice, "we owe it to opera as a whole, and the Royal Opera House itself, to sit down and have a fresh look at what fulfilling a grand-opera role means."

Stop the flow: I want to get on. Precisely what does this last, vague intention mean? Radically alter the status quo? Tear down the walls of elitism? Bring down seat prices dramatically? It seems not. "There is evidence that they cannot sell all their seats at present. So any strategies that might have seemed feasible two years ago, like putting ten per cent on top prices and taking the price down on cheaper seats, is not going to be possible."

Well, then, how about increasing subsidy to the level of continental "grand opera" houses? Again, Fisher parries. "It isn't realistic at this stage to see, in the early 1990s,

any substantial progress in getting the ROH back to the percentage of subsidy that it was ten years ago."

So will Labour approach the problem of paying for our opera houses any differently from the Conservatives? Fisher would like to "explore ways of getting more output broadcast: that would get opera to a wider audience". But doesn't the tangled web of union house-agreements make the broadcast of opera a logistical and financial nightmare? "There are undoubtedly heads to be knocked together," agrees Fisher, mustering a business-like look. "Labour has a difficulty. It saves the Tories for 12 years of 'underfunding' the arts, for 'forcing' the RSC temporarily to close its Barbican base, and so on. Neil Kinnock has promised — on Radio 1, no less — more money for the arts. The implication is that the arts will now be 'properly funded', that some magic amount of subsidy will be found that keeps everybody happy. Yet Fisher is far too circumspect a politician to dwell on

specifics. His view is that "how much more [subsidy] and how sustained that growth will be will depend on the state of the economy and the rate of growth". In other words, the arts will get what the country can afford, not what they say they need. No new thinking there.

If Labour has one Big Idea for British culture, it is its proposed new Ministry of Arts and Media. Its advantage over the present Office of Arts and Libraries, according to Fisher, will be "coherence" — by which he means that it will have responsibility for everything from arts and crafts to the record business, heritage, broadcasting, libraries and museums, publishing and the British film industry (which, one is not surprised to learn, Labour confidently expects to raise from the dead). Whether bringing all this stropky bunch together under one roof guarantees coherence is debatable.

Fisher happily admits that

Labour's arts ministry will be modelled on Jack Lang's grandiose establishment in Paris — which he appears to revere. Hain's Lang's ministry poured money into some absurdly unsupervised black holes, such as the Bastille Opera in its early days. "If one or two of the schemes have run into problems, that's almost inevitable when you have a huge expansion in policy," says Fisher.

He points out that his new arts ministry will be small and not necessarily high-spending; rather, it will gain political clout by tying together the commercial and subsidised ends, and thus demonstrating that "the arts, far from being in need of government handouts, are actually enormously profitable." Fisher's optimistic scenario is that "the new arts minister will go to the Treasury with a much more positive case for subsidising, because the ministry as a whole will be a net contributor to the Treasury."

Why would, for example, a successful record company welcome an arts ministry interfering in its

activities? "Well, the music industry at the moment does, in fact, come under the Department of Trade and Industry. But in the DTI they are dwarfed by the problems of the heavy industrial sector. It makes much more sense that they are in a ministry that has a direct responsibility for nurturing the talent on which they depend. Our record industry is so successful because we have one of the best music infrastructures in the world."

An all-encompassing arts ministry, a policy of devolving powers to regional bodies: all this might seem to leave the Arts Council with no role worth playing. "It will be quite clear under a Labour government," says Fisher, "that it will be the arts ministry which will set the national cultural strategy. The Arts Council will have a very important role implementing that. But in recent years, they have been trying to fill the vacuum in policy left by this government. There won't be that vacuum with a Labour government." He smiles, very reasonably.

ARTS BRIEF

Out with a gala

GLYNDEBOURNE is going out in a blaze of glory. This summer's opera festival was due to finish early, on July 23, after which the theatre will be demolished to make way for the new building. Now a grand gala has been announced for the following day, July 24. Pavarotti, Caballé, Raimondi, von Stade and Söderström are among the stars who will entertain an audience (including the Prince of Wales) that will be paying £1,000 or £750 a ticket. Bernard Haitink and Andrew Davis will conduct.

Dressing up

THE actress Dame Gwen Frangon Dams, who died last week at the age of 101, will be commemorated at the Theatre Museum in Covent Garden. On February 14 the actor Nigel Hawthorne will unveil a watercolour by Dame Laura Knight of Dame Gwen dressing for the role of Juliet. In a dressing room at the Birmingham Rep in 1922. Two years later, she played Juliet opposite Gielgud's Romeo in London. The picture was purchased for the Theatre Museum by friends of the actress.

Dublin amen

TWO hundred and fifty years to the day after Handel's *Messiah* had its first performance, in Dublin on April 13, 1742, Sir Neville Martin and the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields will be in Dublin to give an anniversary performance. Channel 4 will broadcast the event live in Britain.

Last chance...

ONE of the most impressive of all the exhibitions connected with last year's Japan Festival, the Royal Academy's *Hokusai* fills the elegant spaces of the Sackler Gallery upstairs with 150 printed works, plus a few original drawings, dating from all periods of the master's long and busy career. The best known are the series of views of Mount Fuji which he embarked on when approaching 70, but there are rare delights throughout. Until Sunday (071-439 4996).

INTOMORROW'S LIFE & TIMES

Geoff Brown on new films, including Bette Midler's *For the Boys*

TELEVISION REVIEW

Open-and-shut too easily

As in some other recent exposés of police behaviour, the impression was that a few officers might well have massaged the evidence in last night's fly-on-the-wall documentary, *The Murder Squad* (Thames/ITV). It brought us such a neat, open-and-shut murder case, so efficiently handled by the boys in blue that the whole thing could have passed as a handsome police recruitment video.

This was the first of a seven-part series being trumpeted as a rare and unvarnished peek at the workings of Scotland Yard's murder squad. No punches had been pulled. The cameras had been given unprecedented access.

There is no reason to doubt this, or the fact that the police who investigated the murder of 69-year-old Douglas Piper in north London two years ago — last night's subject — did an efficient job of nabbing the murderer, hearing his confession and then getting him sent down for life. Heaven knows, we've all got enough odd jobs to do and errands to run every day without spending our spare time trapping criminals.

The Murder Squad made us grateful that people such as Detective Superintendent Russ Allen and his team were out there catching murderers for us. We hoped all police were as diligent and decent as those we saw put on parade last night. They even turned up to Piper's funeral.

We certainly learned something about how grim life can be for some people in north London. But as for mystery,

JOE JOSEPH

• Television listings, page 12

LONDON GALLERIES

Eyes tricked by an airbrush

Ben Johnson, whose heightened-realist paintings are today's classic images of architecture, talks to Marcus Binney



"Black and white floors stronger than in any De Hooch": Margaux, a 1989 acrylic by Ben Johnson

the aplomb of a fashion designer. One huge abstract canvas, looking like an aerial view of deckchairs on Brighton beach, has enough dashing sets of stripes for a wardrobe of several hundred blazers.

He says that the new play on colour and shapes is influenced by Matisse's paper cuts and also American quilts. One canvas is a brilliant *trompe l'oeil* of giant tiddly-winks, looking as if they are frozen in transparent plastic.

Would he take on a commission to colour a whole building? "I don't like skins. I like the idea that if you chip

away at something you find the same thing or even better below. I want to bring people into contact with real materials."

The work of Carlo Scarpa and Frank Lloyd Wright is a revelation in this way, he says. "But with modernism you can still feel hungry when you leave a building. Only part of your appetite has been satisfied. My passion now is to work with patinated materials."

He has an idea for a work that would change or light up according to the pressure and pattern of work on the main computer in a company headquarters. "Imagine a hospital or tax office. As they went

through the alphabet, different parts of the sculpture would light up. It might just be beams of light. I need to explore."

Ben Johnson's paintings and models are so slick that it is difficult to gauge how much work goes into them. He usually takes four or five days just photographing a building. Recently he has taken to using an old-fashioned plate camera with a rising front, which can alter the relation of floors, ceilings and walls in fascinating ways.

"Then I spend two to three weeks working on the drawing, the structure of the painting," he explains, "sometimes with the help of a computer."

After an exceptionally good lunch in Bordeaux, he accepted a commission to paint a new wine vault in the form of a rotunda, by Ricardo Bofill, only to discover that painting thousands of barrels arranged in a circle in correct perspective involved drawing 26,000 different ellipses. "Thankfully," he says, "I found a computer company willing to do it as an exercise."

Then comes colour mixing, which may take four to six weeks. "I may mix up 99 colours. These are chosen from hundreds of hand-painted samples he has. The colours are put in little plastic canisters (like those in which 35mm film is packaged), ready for the airbrush. The final painting is built up in 20-30 layers.

His latest paintings include not only new buildings but historic interiors, with black and white floors stronger than in any De Hooch. His exhibition is a must for anyone who enjoys paintings that play tricks with the eyes; if you're quick you might even be able to steal one of his ideas for a mobile.

Ben Johnson: Paintings and Diverse Projects, at Fischer Fine Art, 30 King Street, London W1 (071-839 3942), Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm, Sat 10am-1pm, until March 5.

ROCK RECORDS

All blown down

GARTH BROOKS is the most popular singer in the United States today. His third album, *Ropin' the Wind* (Capitol CDESTU 2182)

Ropin' the Wind has topped the rock chart for ten weeks, and his other two albums are in the Top 30. So why is he never played on American Top 40 radio and has hardly been heard of in Britain? Brooks is a country singer and, despite various marketing campaigns and the emergence of young, New Country performers such as Dwight Yoakam, country remains the great neglected popular music genre.

Yet the division between country and mainstream rock has never been less clear. Rock acts such as The Grateful Dead have been borrowing country melodies and using fiddles, accordions and pedal steel guitars for years; singers such as Yoakam have adapted a hefty backbeat and a rock 'n' roll attitude to traditional country.

Ropin' the Wind is a delightful conflation of hard country and soft rock. Brooks has crystallised the convergence of styles and discovered a vast audience for whom the barrier between country and pop has ceased to exist.

He has an authentic country voice and lyrics about truckers stranded on a snow-

DAVID SINCLAIR

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VICTORIA MCKEE

Q How strongly do you agree or disagree that: "Women with young children should not go out to work. But stay at home, to look after them?"

Response	Percentage
Strongly agree	16%
Tend to agree	28%
Neither agree nor disagree	17%
Tend to disagree	23%
Strongly disagree	14%
Don't know	1%

Base: 2,075 aged 18+ **Source:** MORI

sons department store — the Selfridges of LA. The Hilton also boasts one of the best and most fun restaurants in LA, Trader Vic's, offering some of the finest Hawaiian cuisine in the world. The hotel offers a free car service for shopping trips in Beverly Hills.

Both hotels are first-class.

A minister for amour propre

Libby Purves meets Véronique Neiertz, champion of French women's rights and of a bill to make sexual harassment punishable by fine, or imprisonment

Among the English-speaking peoples, discussing the issues of sexual harassment at work is as unrewarding as wrestling a blanchon.

During the Judge Clarence Thomas fiasco the matter became a blur of emotion and sexual politics. Feminist ideologues vied with bandwagoning males as to who could produce the more boring and pausing generalisations: on the other side of the fence, rebellious men sniggered, and irritable working women wondered why the very chaps who were so volubly anxious to protect them from bum-pinchers had clearly so little intention of putting them on the board either.

Then the BBC brought out a mass of guidelines and helpines under the charge of Margaret Salmon who, on being asked to define what sexual harassment was, said: "Why do we need to?"

There was only one place to run. France, equally famous for its addition to gallantry and its fondness for highly educated politicians and logic. Paris where Véronique Neiertz, the minister for women's rights and daily life, has been presiding over a remarkable strengthening of laws and sanctions on the matter.

She not only defines *l'harcellement sexuel* with perfect willingness but, during the spring session of the national assembly, will guide through laws treating it as a straightforward crime, with penalties of up to Fr100,000 (more than £10,000) or a year in prison, or both.

Already the climate is changing: following the December vote on the law Jean-Paul Drouart, a businessman in Lille, received a three-month suspended sentence and a Fr10,000 fine under existing laws of *attentat à la pudeur*—"ambush upon the modesty", or sexual assault—after certain "touching and out-of-place gestures" had taken place upon a 21-year-old employee.

Mme Neiertz is a tiny, formidable figure in her fifth year, her gaze direct and critical through school-mistress glasses. She moves with the sort of speed a woman builds up after combining 27 years of marriage and three children with careers in information technology and politics (this is her second ministry: she left consumer affairs last spring).

The security men in the building opposite have formed the habit of sitting in the window in order to dart out and catch up with her when she abruptly leaves her ministry. After our interview she decided she had no time for a

photo-session outside, but then suddenly appeared to take pity on us and agreed.

Much as she dislikes photographs, I was left with the impression that she rather enjoyed the chase. She rewarded us with a dazzling smile and her first lapse into English: "You see", she says, summing it all up, "I do not want Sex War".

Her success in presenting the case for criminalising sexual harassment is remarkable. Even after a survey confirmed that one employee in five—male and female—had suffered from it, her department feared that there would be jeering at any attempt to legislate. "It is difficult", she says, "to talk about sex sensibly in France. Either there are silly jokes or strict moralising. And it has been an enormous taboo: until now women have been afraid to talk of harassment, because their husbands will say: 'She asked for it, dressing like that'. It is a hidden burden."

But the unions were well behind her, and the public response has been relatively sober and enthusiastic, with headlines crying *Bas les putes!* ("Paws Off!") and only a few affectionate cartoons, such as the one showing Mme Neiertz standing in front of a chart of the female body, with a tariff of fines on each part.

This is probably because of her steady refusal to take a radical feminist line. She found the Thomas case "unbelievable, ridiculous", and brushes away complaints about men who whistle in the street, or put up posters of naked women. She is only interested in "the great wrong"—which, in her view, is the abuse of hierarchical power. Women, she says, can sort out the rest in the traditional manner. "What is wrong", she says, "with *un gifle*—a slap round the face?"

One cannot imagine a minister getting away with that in Britain or America: there would be hisses of outrage at the idea of condoning violence and forcing women to defend themselves against patriarchal oppression. "Bah!", she says, "Frenchwomen know how to give *un gifle*. Why can't Americans?"

She is also disapproving of the British approach. "You deal with all this through equal opportunities law. In France, we saw that sexual harassment can be from a man to a man, perhaps, and just as bad. It is nothing to do with equal opportunities. It is closer to blackmail. So we make it a straightforward crime, irrespective of sex."

However, in her definition it is only a crime, to be taken up by the *Inspection du Travail* (roughly



"Sexual harassment is close to blackmail. So we make it a crime": Véronique Neiertz on a modern solution to an age-old problem

equivalent to our Health and Safety Inspectorate) or, in extreme, by the courts, if it involves abuse of power.

This is the key power. In her definition, sexual harassment is "a word, gesture, attitude or behaviour by a superior with a view to compelling an employee to respond to a solicitation of a sexual nature". She does not deny that unpleasantness occurs between equal colleagues, but says that women must defend themselves against it by complaining to the boss, if necessary.

If the superior does not help, he or she is abetting the harassment, and official or legal help can be sought. And it is forbidden, under the *code du travail*, to punish or dismiss anyone for making such a complaint.

The boss, in other words, is responsible for creating a decent working environment. "The best guarantee of it, of course, is a good mixture of the sexes in authority at all levels," Mme Neiertz says.

She has a strong feeling for poor women, whose health and family problems she deals with constantly, and her only flash of temper in the interview occurs when I ask whether she still has much chance to talk to ordinary women.

"I am an ordinary woman," she says. "I have worked in industry. I have my own problems with home and family, and I constantly meet with women in the road, at the market, around schools. In my constituency of St-Denis. I meet them and they tell me their experiences and the burdens they bear."

"Most of our unemployed are women, and there are many on

short contracts or part-time. It is they, as well as white-collar workers, who are vulnerable to this kind of blackmail. Be clear: it is blackmail to make sexual advances to someone who depends on you for your work. Blackmail for money, blackmail for your job or promotion: it is all the same. That is why everyone in government perfectly understands why we must deal with it."

"But never mind the wink in the corridor, the naked poster on the wall, the jokes. In cases of blackmailing harassment the state has something to say, and does. Otherwise, the relations between men and women are merely part of life."

This is one of François Mitterrand's "bright young women"—like her senior, Marlene Aubry, the employment minister. But Mme Neiertz regrets

the low proportion of women in French politics and some other professions. "That is part of our problem, which we must address."

Does she see herself, then, as a role model? She stares in brief horror at this British journalist, talking such frightful American gobbledegook. "Role-model? Certainly not. I am not even a model for my own daughter. She sees life quite differently. I am of another generation. She is 23 and has her own ideas. That is the way things advance."

"Mme Neiertz has great intelligence, great clarity," says her assistant as we clatter downstairs, trying to keep up with her. I am too breathless to answer. Madame turns a sudden dazzling, feline smile on the photographer, who is cautiously trying out his charm. "I like Englishmen," she says. No, definitely no sex war here.

'We were hiding in a Legendary place'

Continued from page 1

In hiding, as I was, the signs, the symbols, slogans, took on added meaning: I remembered a short story by Paul Bowles in which some Buddhists in (back then) Ceylon ask some Western gentlemen whom they encounter on a bus about the meaning of the stripes and colours of their ties. What did the stripes and colours signify? Why did some men wear ties while others not?

Who can believe the story? Who can remember? What's reasonable these days? These were sample questions from the book I bought called *Welsh for Learners*. What's cooking in the oven? What's perfect? What's in the soil? What's better than this? Who was collecting stones? Who had been crying? Which ones had failed? Who cleaned the edges? Some sample sentences employing the conditional were: "We catch elven, purposely deceived them." "I should have taken the bitter medicine." "The woman should have suffered it." "They should pay half at least." I liked especially the Welsh expression *yn eidd eidd*, which means "in your element", elven meaning "element" but sounding small, manlike and mischievous.

I made a project of learning to translate Welsh place names. I'd grown up in Pennsylvania never knowing that Bryn Mawr is Welsh for "big hill". I made a project of Welsh sounds. Bwl is easier to say when you know that it's the word for bull; when you know that bwl is the word for buckle, bwm for boom, bwb for bulb; bwrdd sgôr, scoreboard; bwrdd spring, a trampoline. Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysilioogoch is the longest placename on the map. What the name means is "Saint Mary's Church of the pool of the white hazel near the rushing whirlpool of Saint Tysilio's Church, near the red cave". What's a red cave? I wrote down in my notebook: what makes it red? I kept trying to make sense from nothing. What is the name of that bird? I kept thinking to myself: what if these are the limits of life, what if this is the all of what is? Once a month the Brecon-

Radnor Express had a page called "W.I. News". "W.I." I found out, stood for Women's Institute. Women's Institute was the name of a club, a service club, and hundreds of them were scattered throughout Wales. Once a month on the "W.I." page, page eight, I could read the reports from the clubs in the country—from Three Cocks and Llanyrdyd and Aberhonddu and Bwlch and Defynnog and Garth.

A pleasant half-hour was spent looking at local and holiday slides taken by members which proved to be very interesting. Japan is densely populated but Mrs Saut saw no litter and found the people polite and friendly. Mrs Ursula Humphrey proposed a vote of thanks.

From Crickhowell: "The competition, a Valentine verse based on bread, was won by Mrs Freda Jones." From Blith Wells: "The competition 'Most Artistically Folded Napkin' was won by Mrs Dilys Jones." From Penderyn: "The competition 'The Most Unusual Teapot' was won by Mrs Cooke." From Llangasty: "Refreshments were served and there followed a 'social time', organised by Mrs Wendy Griffith, during which members had some fun demonstrating how ambidextrous they were." From Garth: "The competition was, for the longest apple peel." From Defynnog: "The competition was for the most unusual button." From Glasbury: "The competition was for an unusual pebble." From Tretower: "Competition winners for the best covered coat-hanger were..."

There was an article one week called "From Sheep to Shells" about a woman in the Brecon hills who had decided that her small-holding could not provide her with a decent living raising sheep, so she had sold them and invested in a one-hundred-breeder-strong combination of land snails, African ones, said to be more tender and less rubbery than their North European cousins. It was by reading this article that I learned that the African land snail gestates in four months as compared to two years for the European species, and that Eastern European snails have been contaminated anyway, ever since Chernobyl.

It was in the Brecon-Radnor

Express, too, that I read that "A farmer who staggered into a neighbour's house half-naked, covered in blue dye with his hands and testicles bound with rubber bands, has been cleared of the charges that he planted a hoax bomb and wasted police time."

Stephen Gilmore Williams said that he had crossed two fences with his hands tied behind his back and his testicles bound in a rubber band but Detective Inspector D.A. Davies of Ammanford had tried to do the same but had failed to do so.

ONLY JESUS SAVES I saw one day painted on a railroad bridge when we were driving somewhere on the run near Merthyr Tydfil, and the plissmon in my company remarked, "Not on our bloody pensions Jesus couldn't." WALES IS NOT FOR SALE I saw painted on some rocks in the Black Mountains. I learned that there had been an increase in the incidence of arson, that Welsh nationalists were setting fire to the summer homes owned by the English. And there was murder, too. And racial violence.

From the Express I learned about the findings of an inquest—JURY RETURN VERDICT THAT YOUTH WHO DIED IN RIVER PLUNGE WAS UNLAWFULLY KILLED—into the death of a 20-year-old boy from Trefnewydd, Llanfaes, who had fallen 20 feet from the Llanfaes Bridge in Brecon into the river Usk the previous December.

A Home Office pathologist had found that the deceased had died of brain damage resulting from a fractured skull. She, the doctor, had discovered no evidence of drowning. The report, which I read in my room in my place of hiding, said, "Passing Christ College the two defendants, who were quite merry by then, began singing a Max Boyce song about the English not being able to raise a rugby team to beat the Welsh. It was fairly rude, they added." Who's Max Boyce? I wrote down in my notebook.

It was the forty-seventh item on my list of things to find out, my list of things to find out, my list of things to learn and do. Number 46 was Try to get a copy to re-read Hal IV, Part I, re: OWEN GLEN-DOWER. Number 45, crossed



Cancelled: Salman Rushdie and Marianne Wiggins plan a trip to America they would never take

out, had been *Find out the diff* between SCREE and SLAG.

"As they were a quarter way across Llanfaes Bridge, still singing," the article continued, "a witness noticed two other youths on the opposite side of the bridge who were carrying paper-wrapped portions of fish and chips and eating from them. 'Because we thought we might have offended them', the defendants said. 'Then all of a sudden, they testified, the blond-haired person charged across the bridge and grabbed one of them by the collar and was abusive towards him, calling him 'a wanker'. Aware that the other person, the deceased, had come across the bridge as well, one of the defendants testified, 'Something caught my eye and I saw him against the railings. He flipped over backwards over the bridge. The whole incident happened within seconds.'"

At the outset of his summing-up, the coroner told the jury what verdicts they could consider appropriate to return. The choices facing them, he said were a) unlawful killing, b) accidental death or death by misadventure, and c) an open verdict.

"Unlawful killing", the article went on to teach me, "means manslaughter or murder." What's an "open verdict"? I wrote down. I looked it up. An open verdict is a finding by a coroner's jury of death without stating the cause. Death by unstated causes: death by

death, in other words, *Marw* is the word in Welsh that translates "dead". It sounds like *mort*, when spoken. *Marwolaeth* is the word that means "mortality", *marw* is the word for "lethal", *marw* is the word for cinder, a dead fire.

One night, watching news from elsewhere on the television, I saw the president of a bankrupt desert nation speak into a microphone while an English-accent male voice-over translated his, the president's, intent to send a black arrow of revenge from that distant desert into my husband's heart. We were hiding in a Legendary place, a place where Legends grew-from-ground, Arthurian, Tolkienian.

psychopath to die. We try to study and to learn. Names of things. One Legend says that Welsh fairies are afraid of iron because the fairies are the lost survivors of a tribe of never-ageing children whose ancestors fell victim to a race of conquerors who conquered them with weapons made of iron. What is the name of that bird? What is ink made of? Could I write in blood? What are words made of?

One time, long ago, I wrote a book about adventures on a desert island. Isn't that a laugh? Crusoe used to go around his desert island and, as Orlando did, Crusoe used to carve his name in trees. Crusoe and Orlando were both fictions. They weren't men. Others made them up and wrote them down.

Tomorrow, in a book called *The Oxford Companion to the Mind*, I will read an essay titled "Chinese Evidence on the Evolution of Language" so I can learn about the use of pictograms. Tomorrow I will shout at planes and jets that come at us like arrows. Tomorrow I will find the picture with the diagram inside the book that tells me finally simply and beyond a doubt the way religion tells some people, *This tiny thing of beauty in the tree outside your window is a chaffinch, Marianne*.

From Bet They'll Miss Us When We're Gone, a collection of stories and essays by Marianne Wiggins to be published by Secker & Warburg on March 9 (£13.99).

© 1990 Marianne Wiggins

MANWATCHING

Piece of the action

War is his claim to frame — if he could get to the front line

He moves like a panther through the urban jungle. His face is hard, his body taut. He is a man who has seen life. And death. He is dressed for action in rugged boots and a sleeveless flak jacket. He shoots to kill.

Today he is shooting a nice picture of ducks on the key Serpentine, but the photographer is still dressed for combat just in case the call comes through on his mobile: "Hit the war zone, Nick." Although Nick rarely ventures beyond the Surrey borders, except in his dreams, he is always ready for action. He sleeps with his passport in his pyjama pocket, his overnight bag at the ready.

His favourite phrases are "gritty", "black and white" and "when I was in Beirut". His favourite films are *Salvador*, featuring James Woods as a photographer-cum-superhero, and now *Hors la Vie*, featuring the photographer as superhostage.

His is a life for men, not boys, and certainly not women. When the paparazzi bay, and the would-be war photographers line up to shoot a royal, you can guarantee that not one of the carefully battered leather jackets contains a bra.

Entry into the select society of male photographers is not simple. The official dress-code must be observed, and the correct equipment lugged. Jeans must strain across the crotch, and the occupant must learn to strut wide-legged, for he is an urban cowboy, and the camera is his gun.

The make of camera does not particularly matter, so long as there are at least two, one slightly chipped by a city riot. These must be coupled with the essential virility symbol, a vast selection of long, heavy lenses. Everywhere Nick goes he takes a camera bag packed with metal and plastic.

By the time he is in his early thirties, he walks lopsided even without the bag. If only he could forego cool for convenience, he could get one of those useful trolley shopping trolleys to trail behind him.

Sadly, he is doomed to a life where style outweighs practicality: Nick has to drive an

'He must learn to strut wide-legged, for he is an urban cowboy, and the camera is his gun'

unparkable Jeep to fulfil his secret fantasy that he is taking action pictures in the Paris-Cape Town rally. His tight jeans cut off the blood to his brain, if the quality of his conversation is anything to go by, and his photographs come out peculiarly bright because he wears sunglasses indoors.

Nick's accessories include a series of fashion models who, he thinks, would show him off to better advantage if they were not so tall. These are temporary girlfriends acquired at fashion shoots who leave him when the promised introduction to Helmut (Newtown) fails to materialise. This continues to puzzle him, for he feels he combines the qualities every woman wants: the sensitivity of the artist and the machismo of the mercenary.

Thus his life plods on until one day someone makes the terrible mistake of believing that he is indeed equipped for, frontline photographic combat, and sends him to Kurdistan, the West Bank or Croatia. There he either grows up and begins to care more about the subject of his photographs than the size of his Jeep, or else he fails to wear a bullet-proof vest, takes too many risks, and gets shot.

Of course, there are many courageous war photographers who genuinely believe in what they are doing, and have a much tougher job than reporters, because they must be in the action to show it. Needless to say, they do not include the subspecies of Nick.

Fortunately, his employers realise he should not be allowed anywhere more dangerous than the top of his portable step-ladder as he snaps royalty. The only risk he should take is being kicked by irate judges, as he richly deserves.

KATE MUIR

TOMORROW

On the Books pages: Peter Riddell on Nixon's ruin and recovery; Hugh Thomas on Latin America; and Michael Wright on D.M. Thomas's *Flying into Love*

Britons are in danger of losing new "quality" drama to endless repeats, Ted Childs predicts

Pruning the buds of May

Cheaper drama productions and more repeats may soon be filling the nation's television screens as a result of pressure on broadcasters to reduce expenditure.

Over the next ten years, analysts predict that there will be an increase in total television advertising revenue of 3 per cent. At present some 92 per cent of advertising revenue accrues to ITV, which includes the return from Channel 4. From 1993 onwards Channel 4 will sell its own air time as BSkyB presently does. Channel 5 is scheduled to do from 1994 and the new commercial cable and satellite services will do as and when they become operational.

The projection is that by 2002 Channel 3 will be garnering 60 per cent of the total available television advertising, Channel 4 15 per cent, with the remaining 25 per cent shared between BSkyB, Channel 5 and whatever other services have proved viable by that time. The perceived wisdom is that of that final 25 per cent, BSkyB will take the lion's share.

Television broadcasters spend more on drama than they do on any other form of original programming. Given the figures I have just cited, it would clearly be too simplistic to deduce that, by the end of the upcoming decade, Channel 3 will be spending 40 per cent less on drama than ITV is now doing.

However, the pressure to reduce expenditure has to intensify. Not only will the new Channel 3 contractors be competing increasingly for revenue, they will have to hand over much more to the Exchange for the privilege of participation.

Some Channel 3 franchises will pay a lower licence annually to the Treasury than others, but the larger companies will also have to contribute a significant tranche of cash as a proportion of their annual advertising revenue. In the case of Carlton and Central, as much as 11 per cent.

How are these economics likely to affect drama production within the UK commercial television?

Channel 3 seems likely to remain the largest source of original programming for the foreseeable future. Even so, the pressure to lower production costs will be massive. In editorial terms this is likely to result in the commissioning of more low cost, long-running serials: drama with identifiable ethnic identity, contained and strongly character based, what we affectionately call "soaps".

Formats like this often generate large audiences and can be made profitably in the UK market alone. Growth in this type of drama will, I fear, be at the expense of the middle ground of British TV drama — the well-crafted, seven to 13 part episodic series often made on film to high standards of performance and production value. *Bergerac*, *London's Burning*, *All Creatures Great and Small*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *Soldier Soldier* and *The Darling Buds of May*. Series like these cost between £500,000 and £700,000 an hour to make. These have to be funded on the basis that they are being "bought" solely for UK transmission.

What about what might be regarded as the top of the range within ITV: the single films made especially for television and the more obviously expensive series such as *Prime Suspect* and *Inspector Morse*?

The good news is that a significant number of advertisers have products which they wish to sell to discerning, cash rich audiences. They will want drama which such audiences are prepared to watch. Of course, a post audience can and does enjoy soap but, as analysis of audience socioeconomic demographics clearly indicates, up-market viewers like "good" drama. Well-made productions can transcend class preferences and be attractive to an audience comprising lots of affluent ABC1s as well as Ds and Es.

Doubtless, the management of Channel 4, once they are free-standing in revenue-raising terms, will seek to assure the advertising profession that they are the "Guardian-Telegraph" to Channel 3's



Then again: William Gaminara and Cathryn Harrison in Central Television's *Soldier Soldier*

"Sun-Mirror" and seek to benefit from up-market advertising. I would hope that Channel 3 will not be driven remorselessly downmarket in terms of the audience it seeks.

It is inevitable, too, that Channel 3's, and for that matter Channel 4's, hunger for more burns-on-seats-in-front-of-tellevestibule will not be confined to seeking to pay less for physical units of drama programming. Almost certainly, they will schedule more repeats of successful shows. Heretofore, the ITV system

did not afford too much scope for repeats. The contractors had too much new drama to unload per transmission schedule.

However, the BBC has a long tradition of successfully repeating drama and situation comedy. The positive audience response to repeats of series like *Inspector Morse* on ITV and Channel 4 augurs for a much higher incidence of this kind of secondary usage.

Circumstances will also induce more of a "why leave off when we are

winning" syndrome among schedulers. If an initial trial series of six or seven episodes is deemed successful in rating terms, there will be pressure for a sequel of up to 26 episodes to be commissioned quickly. Such a programming policy will bring about a revolution in the *modus operandi* of production.

As an extract from a speech by Ted Childs, controller of drama at Central Independent Television and managing director of Central Films Ltd, given to the Royal Television Society last night

We, however, will continue to address questions that actually matter to our viewers, such as education, housing and the health reforms. And we continue to carry out "tough, investigative reporting" — but as part of our brief, not as the be-all and end-all of journalism. That rather machismo view of the object of journalistic enquiry really needs to go the way of open-necked shirts and gold medals.

The new editorship will be a hotly contested affair, although the best candidates will get the job. The job will be to build on the formidable reputation of the programme and continue to deliver important, original journalism on the big questions of the day. And if we continue to win awards as we have in recent years, so much the better.

Samir Shah is BBC Editor of Weekly and Special Programmes, News and Current Affairs

No holes in this flagship

The BBC's *Panorama* is under fire. Samir Shah springs to its defence

ONE of the more entertaining passages in last week's article on *Panorama* on these pages was the appearance of the inevitable unnamed source. The particular pearl that was cast before us was the revelation that *Panorama*'s president exposed of the Maxwell empire last September was not revealing. Well, at least the thought sat well with the other fictions that peppered the article.

However, the facts about *Panorama* tell a rather different story. Mark Thompson has just left the programme, having been promoted to head of features. Under his stewardship, *Panorama* has never had a better period. It has tackled important issues ranging from early diagnosis of how the current recession has hit the South to an analysis of the differing quality of treatment of cancer patients across the country. It has also taken on a wide

range of difficult and tough programming — from *Ulster Defence Regiment* collusion with Protestant paramilitaries to a detailed examination of the relationship between Terry Waite and Oliver North.

As a result, programmes are beginning to get the recognition they deserve. *Panorama* secured three nominations for last year's Emmy for editions on Saddam Hussein's weaponry, the Lockerbie disaster, and South Africa, which secured the award. It also picked up the Golden Nymph at Monte Carlo. The *Max Factor*, the programme detailing Robert Maxwell's difficulties — transmitted when he was alive — was picked by many critics as one of their programmes of the year. We have put it forward

to the Royal Television Society for the best domestic journalism award. But there is always a grain of truth in any hatchet job. These grains, however, do not add up to a "crisis". The truth, then, these have been some staff changes. And, yes, this has upset members of the team. It attests to the loyalty of the team — rallying around their colleagues. But there is a need to freshen teams by bringing in new blood and moving people around. Such moves, and the occasional adverse reaction to them, are commonplace in probably all organisations, and BBC current affairs is no exception.

And, yes, audiences were low last autumn. The average for 1991 was 4.0 million; in previous years it hovered around 4.5. In 1988, the year Michael Grade moved the programme to 9.30pm, the audience did not jump to 9 million. The average for 1985 was 4.9 million, a year later it was 5.2 million, a year after that it was 4.4 million.

Ratings for current affairs need sophisticated analysis. They are a function of a number of factors: inheritance, opposition, the time of day, the time of year, and content. The fact that the programme now goes all year round (including, therefore

the summer — a notoriously poor time for current affairs) will also lead to lower average ratings. The percentage drop this autumn for *Panorama* was 90 per cent. Add to that strong scheduling competition — not in the form of hard journalism, but popular drama — and the drop is understandable.

Importantly, though, the fall is not related to the quality of last autumn's output which was important, original and serious-minded journalism. Readers should reflect on the quite different agenda of our competitors in the independent sector last autumn to see both the future and what happens when current affairs programme-makers are more concerned with audience size than with significant journalistic questions.

Farewell, last of the musketeers

David Plowright has been ousted. Paul Fox mourns the end of an era

What happened at Granada Television this week is not sad enough for tears but it underlines that there is a different beat to the heart of independent television in this country. Of the 15 ITV programme companies not one has a finer programme record than Granada. It is the company that has been in existence longer than any other: it is the company that produces more than its share of prize-winning drama and documentary programmes. It is the home of *Coronation Street*, the longest running and the most popular soap opera on British television. Like others, it also makes its quota of dress: *You've Been Framed* is a Granada programme.

Granada has always been run by showmen or by programme makers. For the first two decades it was run by showmen: the Bernstein brothers Sydney and Cecil. Then the programme-makers took over. First came Denis Forman, who produced *Jewel in the Crown* and was responsible for *Brideshead Revisited*. Then came David Plowright, an early editor of *World In Action* and the driving force behind many of Granada's successful programmes.

Now all four have gone. Cecil Bernstein is dead. Sydney — Lord Bernstein — has retired; so has Sir Denis Forman. David Plowright was the last of the musketeers and now he is an exile too. It is what his departure signifies that matters.

For a start it makes a mockery of the franchise system, already much derided. Just over three months ago, the ITC renewed Granada's contract for another ten years even though the company had been outbid in the auction for the north-west franchise. The challenger, headed by Phil Redmond, had bid more than £35 million, compared to Granada's £9 million, but Television North West failed the quality hurdle and Granada's promises of quality, enshrined in the signature of David Plowright as chairman, won the day. What price the quality hurdle now?

It would be foolish to exaggerate the importance of one man in any company. Granada learnt to manage even

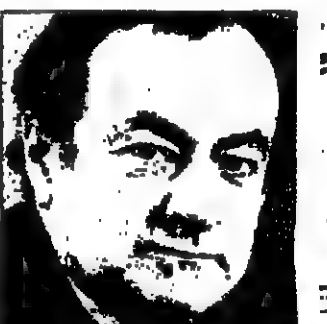
without Lord Bernstein. But having been with the Bernstein brothers almost from day one, David Plowright learnt the Granada style and has given it its tone.

His successor, Andrew Quinn, will be a skilled and imaginative chief executive. He is also a shrewd diplomat, wise in the ways of the ITV jungle. It was his vision that took Granada into satellite broadcasting which may yet turn out to be one of their best investments.

In the major ITV companies, the people who grew up making programmes are disappearing from the boardrooms. The people now in command are sharp and intelligent and they have learnt their trade elsewhere. Some of the new ones have no wish to be broadcasters. The old and the new do not share a sense of calling.

Last week David Plowright was in the United States. He saw that advertising revenue over there is in decline, as are the major networks. There are few jewels among the programmes: the tacky and the tawdry are in the ascendancy. Two of the networks are appendages to major industrial companies. The feel for programming that gave American television its special flavour has gone. There are still some programmes worth watching: many come from Granada.

But then Granada has always been a good business. When one of its oldest programmes, *What The Papers Say* was no longer wanted by ITV or Channel 4 David Plowright sold it to BBC2.



Plowright viewers' champion

To improve the strike rate of *Coronation Street* from two a week to three a week without any drop in quality or loss in popularity was an example of the efficiency that has marked the Plowright years.

Which makes his departure even more surprising. The fact remains that broadcasting has lost one of its founding fathers and viewers who enjoy good programmes have lost a champion.

© Sir Paul Fox is a former managing director of Yorkshire Television and BBC Television

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- 6.00 Coefax 6.30 BBC Breakfast News (1910595)
 8.05 Kilroy. Robert Kilroy-Glik chairs a studio discussion on domestic violence (4472872) 9.50 Hot Chefs. Anthony Worrall Thompson with his latest Italian food (547055)
 10.00 News, regional news and weather 10.05 Playdays (r) (1927785) 10.25 Pingu (r) (6230650) 10.35 No Kidding. Family quiz game show (s) (570921)
 11.00 News, regional news and weather 11.05 Holiday (r) (7604495) 11.30 People Today presented by Miriam Stoppard and Adrian Mills who continue their guide to coping with stress (3380292)
 12.20 Pebble MIM. Music and chat presented by Judi Spiers (s) (326055) 12.55 Regional news and weather
 1.00 One O'Clock News and weather
 1.30 Neighbours. (Coefax) (s) (8041599) 1.50 Going for Gold. With Henry Kelly (191785)
 2.15 Racing and Snooker. Live coverage of the 2.30, 3.05 and the 3.35 races from Ascot (s); and the Benson and Hedges Masters match between Steve James and James Wattana. (Snooker continues on BBC 2 at 4.00) (86195)
 3.50 Children's BBC (395230) beginning with Benemman (r) 4.00 Caterpillar Trail. Nature series (r) 4.10 Fiddley Frodo Bird. Animation (r) 4.25 Jackanory. David Healy with part two of *Stanley and the Magic Lamp* 4.35 Bucky O'Hare. Animation
 5.00 Newsround 5.05 Archer's Goon. Episode five of the six-part children's drama starring Roger Lloyd Pack. (Coefax) (s)
 5.35 Neighbours (r). (Coefax) (s) (155211). Northern Ireland: Inside Ulster
 6.00 Six O'Clock News with Anna Ford and Andrew Harvey. (Coefax) Weather
 6.30 Regional News Magazines (765). Northern Ireland: Neighbours
 7.00 Wogan (s) (3719)
 7.30 Tomorrow's World. Howard Stabford reports from Connemara in the west of Ireland on a new underwater camera and the latest in salmon farming. (Coefax) (s) (553)
 8.00 Only Fools and Horses... More low-life comedy concerning the Trotter brothers. This week Del enters one of Rodney's paintings in a competition and it wins a holiday for three in Mallorca (r). (Coefax) (266389) 8.50 Points of View (39872)
 9.00 Nine O'Clock News with Michael Buck. (Coefax) Regional news and weather (3940)



The decline of an elder statesman: Winston Churchill (9.30pm)

- 9.30 Churchill: Never Deepak.
 ● CHOICE: Martin Gilbert's biography reaches the final 20 years, starting at the close of the second world war and ending with the biggest public funeral of modern times. Although Gilbert remains the detached observer, letting the evidence speak for itself, he cannot disguise a melancholy story. Devastated by the verdict of the 1945 election, Churchill had no relief for the role of leader of the opposition and was turned by its routine. Despite the misgivings of his wife, he returned to the premiership in 1951. He was old and tired and losing his grip. Two years later he had a paralyzing stroke and still clung to office until he was past 80. As in the rest of the series, the best material does not always come from the big public events. It is often in personal vignettes, especially from former secretaries. One recalls the old man staring across the table at his favourite actress, Vivien Leigh, spellbound by her beauty. (Coefax) (61327)
 10.30 Sportsnight introduced by Desmond Lynam. Football: highlights from FA Cup fourth round replays; Olympic Winter Games: a preview of the competitions that begin on Saturday; Snooker: action from the Benson and Hedges Masters at the Wembley Conference Centre; and Cricket: a look forward to the third Test between New Zealand and England (40150). Wales: Sportsnight Wales 12.30am Weather. Ends at 12.35
 2.00 The Way Ahead. John Murray with a summary of benefits for the disabled (r). (3237612). Ends at 2.15

BBC 2

- 8.00 News (2768953)
 8.15 Newsround. A round-up of business from both Houses
 9.00 Daytime on Two. Educational programme
 2.00 News and weather followed by You and Me (r) (74364582)
 2.15 Bitten by the Bug. Professor Erik Holm continues his exploration of the insect world with a look at what they feed on (74351018)
 2.30 Reviving Antiques. John Fitzmaurice Mills with advice on repairing old leaf (2020307) 2.35 Country File. Rural issues examined by John Craven (r) (4251308)
 3.00 News and weather followed by Westminster Live, introduced by Vivian White (7177765) 3.30 News, regional news and weather
 4.00 Snooker continued from BBC1. Further coverage of the Benson and Hedges Masters match between Steve James and James Wattana. (Snooker continues on BBC1 from 1.57.2055)
 4.40 Behind the Headlines. Linda Agran chairs a discussion on extramarital affairs (s) (1382501)
 5.10 Horizon: Malaria - Battle of the Mosquitoes. A repeat of Monday's documentary examining the claims of Colombian chemist Manuel Palatroy to have designed the world's first effective vaccine against malaria (r). (Coefax) (s) (353124)
 6.00 Star Trek: The Next Generation. Lieutenant DeLa creates an android using his own neural programming but Captain Picard is apprehensive about Star Trek's reaction to the unauthorised newcomer. Starring Patrick Stewart with Whoopi Goldberg. (Coefax) (557688)
 6.45 DEF II begins with Reportage. Aminatta Foma and her team examine unemployment and looks at the prospects for the future (537143) 7.25 Rapido. Pop music magazine presented by the Rhythmic Antics (55105)
 7.55 The Day the World Changed. Ralph Steadman nominates the first day of the 20th century as his climactic 24 hours



Portrait of an aristocratic writer: Henry Green (8.05pm)

- 8.05 Bookmark: Trapped - the Story of Henry Green.
 ● CHOICE: No many literary documentaries open with a shot of a lavatory flushing but the image is relevant to the life of Henry Green, or rather his alter ego Henry York. Green was the writer, author of ten books which became neglected in his lifetime but have since enjoyed a critical rediscovery. York was the aristocrat who after Eton and Oxford entered the family engineering firm. It made, among other things, lavatories. Green/York was a shadowy figure. Dashing handsome as a young man, he was sad and reclusive in his later years. We learn that he liked drink, all-night drinking and partying. During the last ten years of his life he hardly left his room. Roger Thompson's portrait tries to throw light into dark corners, visiting Green's houses and his favourite pub and eliciting memories from family and friends. There is, disappointingly, no assessment of Henry Green as novelist
 9.00 Film: Acceptable Risks (1989) starring Brian Dennehy, Christine Ebersole and Clowdy Tyson. A made-for-television drama about how a chemical company's desire to increase productivity turns a once-safe plant into a high-risk danger zone. Directed by Rick Wallace (2211)
 10.30 Newsnight presented by Jeremy Paxman (555562)
 11.15 The Late Show. Arts and media magazine (s) (399598)
 11.55 Weather (441105)
 12.00 Open University: Reindeer in the Arctic 12.25am Seize the Fire (513902)
 12.55 Behind the Headlines (r). Ends at 1.30

- VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes
 The numbers now appearing next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCodes, which allow you to instantly programme your video recorder with a VideoPlus+ handset. VideoPlus+ can be used with video PlusCodes for the programme you wish to record. For more details call VideoPlus on 0899 12244 (calls charged at 48p per minute peak, 35p off-peak) or write to VideoPlus, PO Box 177, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 7YU. VideoPlus, VideoPlus+ and Video Recorder are trademarks of Gemstar Marketing Ltd. (s). PlusCodes (r) and Video Recorder (s) are trademarks of Gemstar Marketing Ltd.

ITV

- 6.00 TV-am (577853)
 9.25 Keynotes. Music quiz game for teams (552495) 9.55 Thames News (4531252)
 10.00 The Time... The Place... Topical discussion series (7415871)
 10.40 This Morning. Magazine series on family matters presented by Judy Finnigan and Richard Madeley (3251679)
 12.10 Allstars. Children's entertainment (s) (250302)
 12.30 News with John Suchet. (Oracle) Weather (5012579) 1.10 Thames News (5355582)
 1.20 Home and Away. Australian family drama series. (Oracle) (5736121) 1.50 A Country Practice. Medical drama series set in the Australian outback (s) (5227105)
 2.20 Graham Kerr with the recipe for home-made radiators pasta in a tomato sauce with basil and oregano sauce (3351423) 2.30 Take the High Road. Soap set in the Highlands (426327)
 3.15 ITN News headlines (612598) 3.20 Thames News headlines (611251) 3.25 The Young Doctors. Drama series set in a large Australian city hospital (521650)
 3.55 The Dreamstone. Cartoon fantasy series (s) (5413124) 4.20 Finders Keepers. Children's game show (503211) 4.50 Owl TV. Wildlife and environmental series presented by Michaela Strachan. Includes a report on the many species of birds that use the Lake Baringo area of Kenya (452421)
 5.10 Blockbusters. General knowledge quiz game for teenagers, introduced by Bob Holness (5762211)
 5.40 News with Carol Barnes. (Oracle) Weather (319582)
 5.55 Thames Help presented by Jackie Spackley (r) (322211)
 6.00 Home and Away (r). (Oracle) (552)
 6.30 Thames News (Oracle) (534)
 7.00 This is Your Life. Michael Aspel springs an emotional surprise on another unsuspecting worthy (s) (5327)
 7.30 Coronation Street. (Oracle) (178)



Going Dutch for low-key detective: Barry Foster (8.00pm)

- 8.00 Van der Valk.
 ● CHOICE: What with the return of the Amsterdam Commissaris and Maigret making a comeback on Sunday, the ITV channel is in danger of becoming overloaded with Continental detectives. Perhaps the people who draw up the schedules should take to each other the hands of the detective in its typically low-key style, with attractive Dutch settings and more emphasis than is usual in such series on the hero's family. Poor old Piat not only has a wife who dislikes his work but a son who has followed him into the force and is bent on causing embarrassment. Tonight's narrative is unhurried, as if conscious of the need to fill a two-hour slot, but patience is finally rewarded with the unravelling of an intricate tale of drugs, kidnapping and murder. A continued reservation is about Van der Valk himself. Despite Barry Foster's efforts, the Commissaris fails to cut a charismatic figure. (Oracle) (1211)
 10.00 News at Ten with Trevor McDonald and Julia Somerville (Oracle) Weather (39455) 10.30 Thames News (222320)
 10.40 Chesspeak. Soccer Spectacular. Highlights of tonight's Rumblooms Cup fifth round replay between Nottingham Forest and Crystal Palace (553579)
 11.10 Film: Visiting Hours (1982) starring Lee Grant, Michael Ironside, Linda Purl and William Shatner. Canadian-made thriller about a woman journalist who is viciously attacked by an intruder. She is taken to hospital where she makes the unconvincing discovery that her ardent ex-husband is the murderer. The film is far from over. Directed by Jean Claude Lau (55101)
 11.40 Film: Portrait from Life (1948, b/w) starring Mel Zetterling, Guy Rolfe and Robert Beatty. The melodramatic tale of the search for the woman subject of a painting in a London art gallery recognised by her father as the daughter he lost contact with during the second world war. Directed by Terence Fisher (559593)
 2.45 America's Top Ten (s) (52302)
 3.10 Videoisation (1983) (3.30) 3.40 Quiz Night (394322)
 4.10 Along the Cotswold Way. Cive Gurnett visits Wotton-under-Edge (r) (49531188)
 4.40 Fifty Years On (b/w). Archive film from February 1942 (1830025)
 5.00 Witness to Survival. Another story of survival against the odds (44070)
 5.30 ITN Morning News with Phil Roman (75577). Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 The Channel Four Daily (9776495)
 8.25 Schools (5938037)
 12.00 The Parliament Programme introduced by Nicholas Owen (35308)
 12.30 Business Daily. News and analysis from the world's money markets (54921)
 1.00 Sesame Street. Entertaining early learning series. The guests are Robin Williams and Whoopi Goldberg (53476)
 2.00 Film: People Will Talk (1951, b/w) starring Cary Grant and Jeanne Crain. Sharp social comedy about a gynaecologist who falls for one of his patients - an unnamed woman student who is pregnant by another man. Directed by Joseph L. Mankiewicz (7772)
 4.00 The Survival Factor: The Bigamy Bird. A documentary about the male pied flycatcher, a bird that may have more than one mate in winter in Africa and returns to Wales each spring to breed (r) (Text) (474)
 4.30 Countdown. Another round of the words and numbers game (s) (259)
 5.00 The Oprah Winfrey Show. The audience is men whose wives treat them more like slaves than lovers (707650)
 5.55 Laurel and Hardy. Cartoon version (53085)
 6.00 Kate and Allie. Susan Sant James and Jane Curtin star as divorcees who decide to share single parenthood and a Greenwich Village home (124)
 6.30 Tonight with Jonathan Ross (s) (476)
 7.00 Channel 4 News with Jon Snow and Zerah Badawi (Teletext) (77534)
 7.50 Party Political Comment from a Labour party politician (566124)
 8.00 Brookside. Soap set in a Merseyside close (5389)



Exploring the city of Bologna: Lady Valerie Soliti (8.30pm)

- 8.30 Travelog. Lady Valerie Soliti and Mrs Adia Pavarotti explore the cultural wealth of the Italian city of Bologna (1124)
 9.00 Dispatches.
 ● CHOICE: A frightening report on Britain's schoolchildren suggests that they are setting themselves up for a high risk of heart disease in later life. The trouble is lack of exercise. According to a survey only 5 per cent of boys and 3 per cent of girls are doing the amount of exercise necessary to develop healthy hearts. The blame lies partly with schools, for cutting down on sport and physical education, a trend that could accelerate as head teachers struggle to make room for the national curriculum. It also lies with a sedentary lifestyle. Many children are now taken to school by car and spend much of their spare time watching television and playing computer games. Contributors to the film include no less than the Duke of Edinburgh. He says he is astonished that we are putting the future health of our children in jeopardy (50766)
 9.45 Sex-Play: First Night. By Sarah Kennedy. A humorous drama exploring a young couple's first night of passion. Starring Lesley Sharp and Nick Hancock (388389)
 10.00 The Golden Girls. Delightful comedy about four women of a certain age sharing a home in the Miami coast. This week Dorothy (Bea Arthur) plots revenge on an old friend who stood her up once during her college days. (Teletext) (s) (35037)
 10.30 The Secret Cabaret with Simon Drake. The illustrious guests are Ricky Jay, Matthew Grynol and Saucy. A talk with strange powers (s) (45755)
 11.00 Drop the Dead Donkey. A welcome repeat for the award-winning topical comedy series set in a television company's newsroom (s) (849)
 11.30 The 25th Club. Showbiz hopefuls face a critical audience at London's Hackney Empire (30263)
 12.30am Tonight with Jonathan Ross (r) (s) (576895)
 12.55 Dick Spanner. Cartoon adventure of the smooth private detective created by Gerry (Thunderbirds) Anderson (506993). Ends at 1.05

ITV VARIATIONS

- ANGLIA
 As London except: 2.30-2.50 Gardening Time (118057)
 CENTRAL
 As London except: 2.30-2.50 The Northern View (551425) 2.50-3.15 The High Road (426327) 3.25-3.55 The High Road (426327) 3.55-4.00 The High Road (426327) 4.00-4.10 The High Road (426327) 4.10-4.20 The High Road (426327) 4.20-4.30 The High Road (426327) 4.30-4.40 The High Road (426327) 4.40-4.50 The High Road (426327) 4.50-5.00 The High Road (426327) 5.00-5.10 The High Road (426327) 5.10-5.20 The High Road (426327) 5.20-5.30 The High Road (426327) 5.30-5.40 The High Road (426327) 5.40-5.50 The High Road (426327) 5.50-6.00 The High Road (426327)
 GRANADA
 As London except: 2.30-2.50 Coming of Age (351425) 2.50-3.00 Granada Today (551425) 3.00-3.10 Granada Today (551425) 3.10-3.20 Granada Today (551425) 3.20-3.30 Granada Today (551425) 3.30-3.40 Granada Today (551425) 3.40-3.50 Granada Today (551425) 3.50-4.00 Granada Today (551425) 4.00-4.10 Granada Today (551425) 4.10-4.20 Granada Today (551425) 4.20-4.30 Granada Today (551425) 4.30-4.40 Granada Today (551425) 4.40-4.50 Granada Today (551425) 4.50-5.00 Granada Today (551425) 5.00-5.10 Granada Today (551425) 5.10-5.20 Granada Today (551425) 5.20-5.30 Granada Today (551425) 5.30-5.40 Granada Today (551425) 5.40-5.50 Granada Today (551425) 5.50-6.00 Granada Today (551425)
 HTV WEST
 As London except: 1.50-2.30 The Young Doctors (5227105) 2.30-3.55 A Country Practice (521650) 3.55-4.00 Home and Away (75577) 4.00-4.10 Home and Away (75577) 4.10-4.20 Home and Away (75577) 4.20-4.30 Home and Away (75577) 4.30-4.40 Home and Away (75577) 4.40-4.50 Home and Away (75577) 4.50-5.00 Home and Away (75577) 5.00-5.10 Home and Away (75577) 5.10-5.20 Home and Away (75577) 5.20-5.30 Home and Away (75577) 5.30-5.40 Home and Away (75577) 5.40-5.50 Home and Away (75577) 5.50-6.00 Home and Away (75577)
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SATellite

- SKY ONE
 ● The Astra and Maripol satellites.
 6.00am The DJ Kat Show (75577) 6.40 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 6.55 Playhouse (47577) 7.10 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 7.30 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 7.45 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 8.00 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 8.15 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 8.30 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 8.45 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 9.00 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 9.15 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 9.30 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 9.45 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 10.00 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 10.15 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 10.30 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 10.45 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 11.00 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 11.15 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 11.30 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 11.45 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 12.00 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 12.15 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 12.30 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 12.45 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 1.00 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 1.15 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 1.30 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 1.45 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 2.00 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 2.15 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 2.30 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 2.45 The DJ Kat Show (75577) 3.00 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